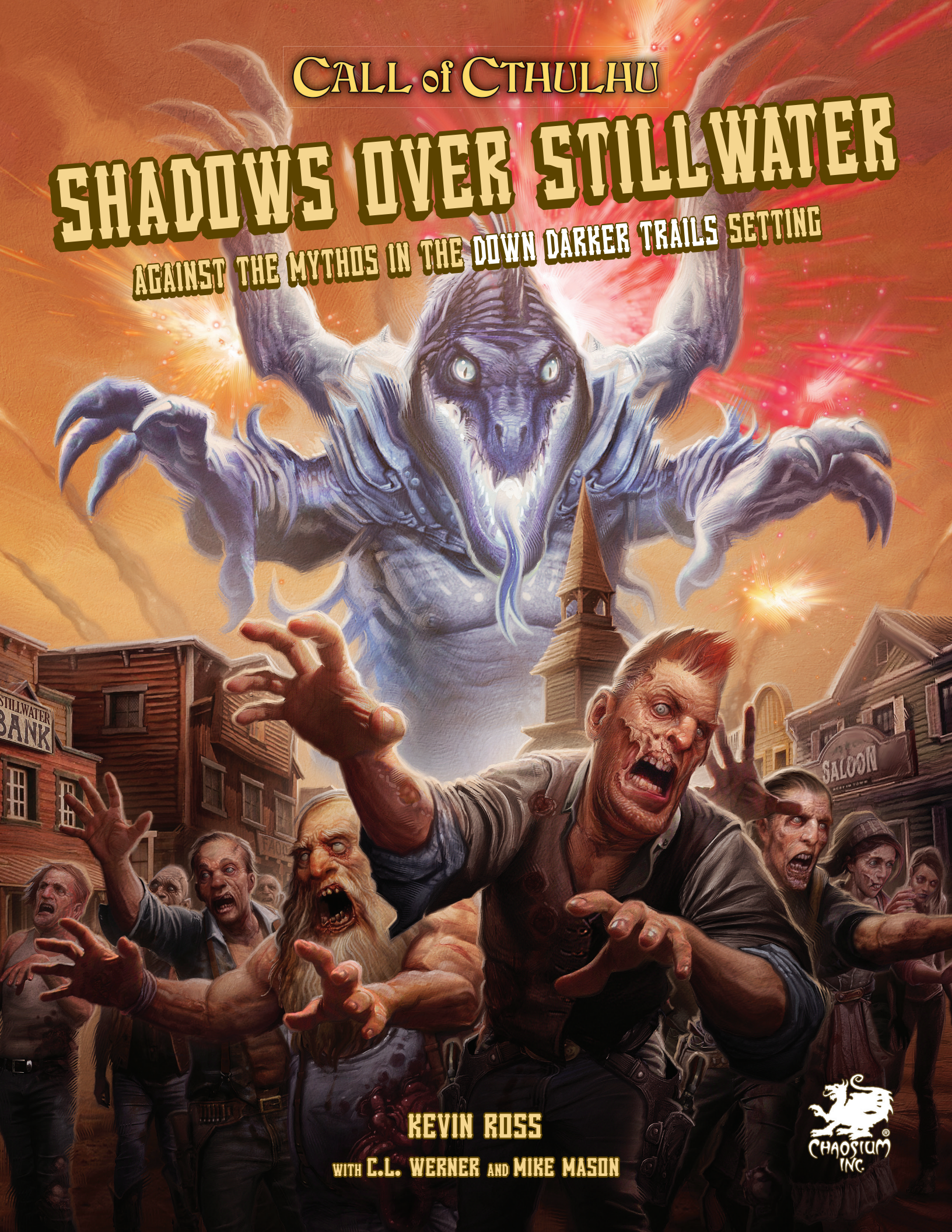


CALL of CTHULHU

SHADOWS OVER STILLWATER

AGAINST THE MYTHOS IN THE DOWN DARKER TRAILS SETTING



KEVIN ROSS

WITH C.L. WERNER AND MIKE MASON



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CREDITS

Authors

Kevin Ross, C. L. Werner, and Mike Mason

Editing and Development

Mike Mason with Lynne Hardy

Cover Art

Victor Leza

Interior Art

David Grilla, Doruk Golcu, Elizabeth Ware,
Loïc Muzy, and Victor Leza

Cartography

Matt Ryan

Art Direction

Mike Mason

Layout

Nicholas Nacario

Proofreading

Ben Krapohl, Tim Gray, and Keith Mageau

Special Thanks

Special thanks to David Larkins for editorial suggestions and recommendations.

Dedication

This book is for Caan Zangerle, who I've probably played more games with than anyone else on the planet. Draw, amigo!

CLEAR CREDIT

The Down Darker Trails setting was created by Kevin Ross.

The Shadow Over Stillwater campaign and its associated appendices, as well as the Stonegarden locale, were written by Kevin Ross with additions and development by Mike Mason. Beneath the Burning Sun was written by C. L. Werner and developed by Mike Mason.

This supplement is best used with the *Call of Cthulhu* (7th Edition) roleplaying game, and may also be used with *Pulp Cthulhu*, both available separately.

This is a work of fiction. This book includes descriptions of real places, real events, and real people. These may not be presented accurately and with conformity to the real-world nature of these places, people, and events, and are reinterpreted through the lens of the Cthulhu Mythos and the *Call of Cthulhu* game in general. No offence to anyone living or dead, or to the inhabitants of any of these places is intended. The material is fictionalized and used here as the basis for tales inspired from the imagination of H. P. Lovecraft and other writers of weird horror fiction.

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FOREWORD

We hope you enjoy *Shadows Over Stillwater* as much as we enjoyed writing it. This book holds a mother lode of Old West adventure! Keep your head down, your eyes peeled, and your guns loaded, amigos.

Kevin Ross
Last gunman left standing

Welcome to the first supplement for *Down Darker Trails*—the Wild West setting for *Call of Cthulhu* and *Pulp Cthulhu*. This book provides further insight and depth for those seeking bold adventure in the American Old West setting.

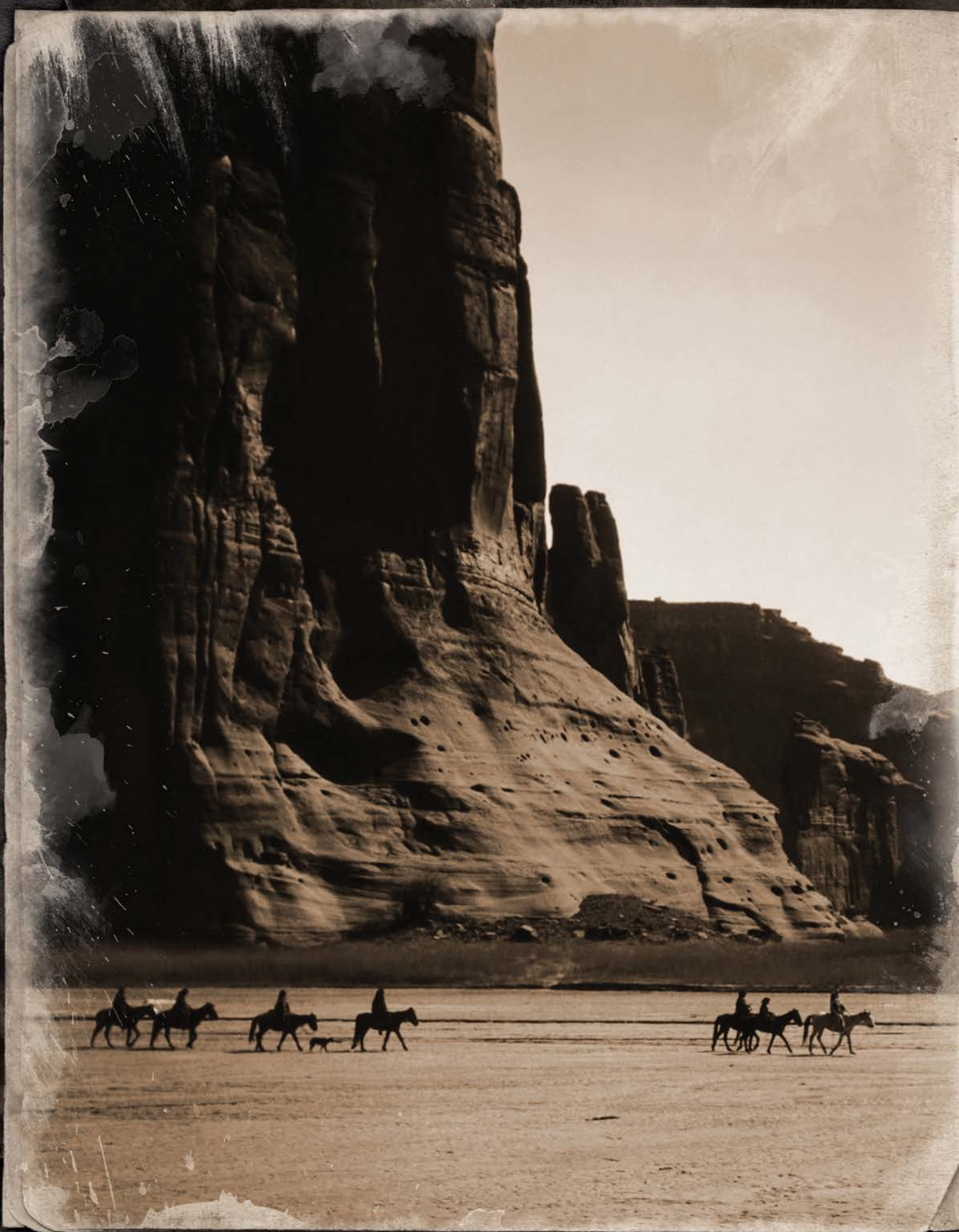
Here, you will find a three-part campaign, *The Shadow Over Stillwater*; a fully detailed locale called Stonegarden, which further expands the setting with an isolated mining town where the dangers of frontier life combined with the festering rot of the Cthulhu Mythos present new challenges for adventurous investigators of arcane lore; and *Beneath the Burning Sun*, a rip-roaring scenario that can be played in isolation or as part of a grander campaign. Ancient technology, untrustworthy townsfolk, strange lights in the sky, and deep rumblings in the ground herald uncanny

adventure. What's more, a campaign appendix offers further ideas, plot hooks, and material for Keepers to shape and develop. That's plenty of action, thrills, and danger to keep your gaming group going for some time!

Use this book to enhance and build your version of the Old West at the gaming table. Whether classic *Call of Cthulhu* or its upstart cousin, *Pulp Cthulhu*, the adventures found in this book can be adjusted to whatever level of grim and gritty or drama and action you require. New insights into the Cthulhu Mythos present further scope, with alien minds intent on bending humanity to its will.

If you intend on being a player and investigator thrust into the dangers and challenges contained within these pages then read no further! Spoilers are liable to jump out at you! But, for Keepers, the following pages present secrets and advice to help you run awesome and memorable games. Take time to fully read through the adventures and prepare to unleash the terrors and mysteries of the *Down Darker Trails* setting on your players!

Mike Mason
Humble barkeep and friend to all



INTRODUCTION

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The Shadow Over Stillwater is a campaign of three connected adventures set in the mountains and valleys of the New Mexico Territory. A hunt for a fugitive murderer leads the investigators into a mystery involving odd townsfolk, strange lights in the sky, walking corpses, proud Apaches, and the machinations of a once-powerful and ancient race seeking to reclaim their lost glory. The campaign is supported with appendices, including ideas and suggestions for further spin-off adventures

Beneath the Burning Sun is also set in the New Mexico Territory and calls for the investigators to join a posse to track down a gang of ferocious outlaws led by a crazed preacher and a strange gunslinger. A desperate bank robbery forces the investigators on a bloody trail leading to an abandoned Spanish fort beside an unquiet mountain lake.

Stonegarden is a booming mining town in Arizona, on the border with Mexico. This new campaign locale presents a community with one of the most violent reputations in the entire West. Detailed with characters, locations, and mysteries. Stonegarden is a place of danger, adventure, and dark secrets.

Finally, **The Devil's Round-Up** provides an extended adventure seed set in a location that may be familiar to long-time *Call of Cthulhu* fans, and provides a roster of characters to darken the day of any investigators who cross their path.

AMERICAN INDIAN NAMING CONVENTIONS

Throughout *Down Darker Trails*, the term American Indian has been used for the indigenous peoples of North America. There continues to be debate on the usage of terms like Native American, which many do not feel adequately represents indigenous peoples. In truth, many people prefer to be referred to by their specific nation or tribe. The authors wish to be culturally sensitive and, where appropriate, we have used specific nation or tribe names, with American Indian being used to encompass the many differing tribes and nations. No offense is intended.

PULP STYLE?

While *Shadows Over Stillwater* is presented to play with "classic" *Call of Cthulhu*, it can also be enjoyed with the *Pulp Cthulhu* supplement, according to your preferred style of play. Throughout this book, certain non-player characters (NPCs) have Luck values and pulp talents for those using the material with *Pulp Cthulhu*, as well as optional advice and scenes where the drama and action is increased. Of course, for classic *Call of Cthulhu* play, the Keeper can ignore these or choose to incorporate whichever elements they feel fit best with their style of game.



THE SHADOW OVER STILLWATER PART I: LAZARUS, IN SPADES

The *Shadow Over Stillwater* is a short campaign consisting of three linked adventures set in southwest New Mexico Territory. The campaign is suitable for groups of any size, as the Keeper can easily scale the opposition to reflect the number of investigators. The campaign's hook involves the apparently simple task of bringing a wanted man back to the investigators' hometown for justice. Unfortunately, the town where their quarry is found is about to suffer an epidemic of bizarre events, from crazed residents to the dead rising from their graves.

Playable with either *Pulp Cthulhu* or with regular *Call of Cthulhu*, the campaign is unabashedly pulpy in tone: a wanted outlaw, insane townspeople, zombies, renegade Apache, and a host of Mythos horrors waiting to spring upon the investigators. Where appropriate, certain non-player characters (NPCs) may have a Luck value, which can be ignored in regular *Call of Cthulhu* games.

As necessary, the Keeper can introduce replacement investigators at various points in the campaign, whether local townspeople or ranchers, prospectors, Apache, travelers, or prisoners of the campaign's villains. The Keeper can also have the cavalry ride to the rescue of outmatched or captured investigators—though the “cavalry” in this case is more likely to be a posse of concerned townspeople and ranchers or a band of Chiricahua Apache than actual U.S. Army troops.

Each of the three adventures is outlined below, followed by descriptions of the various technological devices used by the villains throughout the campaign. The appendix at the end of the third scenario, **Shattered Earth, Poisoned Sky**, includes suggestions for follow-on adventures and a short bibliography.

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

The main villains in this campaign are serpent folk. These creatures awoke within the last decade or so and took control of a small army of their degenerate cousins, the trognophides, who had been watching over their slumbering forms. Having slept for millennia, the serpent people were disgusted to find that humankind had evolved and spread its civilization across the planet, while their own reptilian kin had degenerated into a primitive state. The serpent scientists decided to correct these abominable changes to their world through the use of genetics, drugs, poisons, and advanced technology.

Using such knowledge, the serpent people sought to find a way to reverse the devolution that had befallen their degenerate brethren. This research paralleled an insidious plot to instigate devolution in the human population. Subjects of both species were acquired and experimented upon, and successes were achieved. A plan on a grand scale began to take shape: the serpent people would create genetic viruses that would gradually raise the faculties of their fallen cousins while also eroding the intelligence of humans. The viruses would be dispersed in the air to spread over large areas and populations. Initial experiments were made with exploding rockets sent to seed the skies with toxins, but plans are now underway to use a volcanic eruption to spread the poison on a much larger scale.

Currently, the serpent people have two facilities working on the project. The first is a genetics lab hidden in the mountains north of Stillwater, New Mexico. Here, the serpent people experiment on captured humans and their own devolved kin, and it is from here that they send out their

scientists to Knife Cut Mesa, which lies above Stillwater, to launch their virus-carrying rockets. The second research facility is located a day's ride from Stillwater, inside Shadow Mountain, near the town of Santa Rosita. Here, the serpent people have genetically engineered a number of burrowing creatures to fracture the earth's crust to create a volcano. Soon they will force the volcano to erupt and seed the escaping gases with their viruses, spreading their two-fold revenge across the territory.

Chapter 1: Lazarus, in Spades, the first scenario in the campaign, sends the investigators to Stillwater, New Mexico. Stillwater's marshal has alerted the authorities that Hank Hanratty has been spotted in the town. Hanratty is wanted in the investigators' hometown for killing a marshal some years back, but, since he's not wanted in Stillwater, the marshal has no cause to meddle with the dangerous gunman. Thus, the investigators are hired to travel to Stillwater to capture Hanratty and bring him back for judgment. The outlaw is easily found and dealt with; however, Stillwater has other, stranger problems. Some of its residents have begun acting weirdly. A few have been stricken with gaps in their memory; others have suffered from sudden total amnesia, while some have become drooling imbeciles or raving maniacs. As the investigators deal with the situation, the serpent folk launch another of their rockets over the town, leading to more mayhem and a possible clue as to the cause of all the strangeness. And then the dead begin to rise from their graves!

Chapter 2: Trouble on Knife Cut Mesa immediately follows with the investigators heading to the mesa north of Stillwater to seek out the source of the strange "fireworks." There, they encounter members of a band of Chiricahua Apache, who may aid or confuse their investigation. The party is also hampered by the still-rising dead and by furtive, degenerate serpent folk who lair in an accursed canyon on the mesa. Eventually, the investigators track their quarry to a laboratory complex in the nearby mountains, where they finally come face to face with the true villains of the campaign. Inside the facility, the investigators find hints as to the serpent folk's plans in the form of experimental subjects, human and otherwise. If they aren't careful, they could join these pathetic creatures in captivity.

Chapter 3: Shattered Earth, Poisoned Sky brings the campaign to a potentially explosive finale. The town of Santa Rosita, not far from Stillwater, has been wracked with earthquakes over the past few weeks, and the residents fear that a volcano may be forming within nearby Shadow

Mountain. In reality, the serpent people have been using their engineered creations to activate the volcano. Soon, they will cause it to erupt, spreading degenerative toxins across the area. The investigators' efforts are hampered by the townspeople of Santa Rosita, who are being manipulated by a disguised serpent man intent on creating paranoia among the humans. The investigators may be charged with murder—framed by the serpent man spy in an attempt to cause further confusion and fear. The investigators must delve into Shadow Mountain to find the serpent people's complex, and then devise a way to thwart a plan designed to remake the Earth.

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES OF THE SERPENT PEOPLE

Described here is a range of technology utilized by the serpent folk throughout the campaign. Note that, as with most serpent person technology, once a device has been seen in use, an investigator may subsequently identify another of its type with a successful **Know** roll; however, an **Extreme INT** roll—or **Hard Science (Engineering)** roll—is needed to figure out how to use each item safely. Any fumbled results are likely to cause a device to malfunction badly, trigger a discharge (1D6 damage), or explode (3D6 damage or worse if a grenade).

Armor Crystal

Armor crystals are opaque egg-shaped devices 2 inches (5 cm) long, with a circular bluish stain on one side. Pressing and holding the blue stain for a few seconds activates the device, creating an electromagnetic field that surrounds the user and prevents injury from physical harm. The crystal provides 10 points of armor for 5 rounds (a one-use device), after which the crystal ceases to function and can be discarded. While operating, an armor crystal creates a hazy aura around the person it is protecting.

Beam Weapon Crystal

These weapons appear to be palm-sized, milky white crystals shot through with tiny dark blue striations, with a single 3–4 inch (7–10 cm) long shard jutting out. The device fits in the palm with the shard or "barrel" extending between the fingers toward the target; thumb pressure triggers a bolt of bluish electrical energy at a target. The weapon can be fired once per round, and each successful attack deals 1D8 damage to the target. The base chance to use the device is 05%, and base range is 10 yards/meters. Beam weapon crystals usually contain enough charges for 25–1D6 shots.

Communication Crystal

These devices appear to be flat, palm-sized grayish stones with metallic or crystalline surfaces akin to mica or zinc. To use, they are held in the palm and the surface rubbed with a thumb or finger, which opens a channel to another such device that vibrates when “called.” The user can cycle through various channels/receivers by tapping the communicator’s surface, and the device has a range of 20 miles (32 km). Once a call is answered, the device uses one charge per minute of audio communication. Communication crystals have enough power for 25–1D6 charges.

Disguise Serum

Enables the user to take the outward physical appearance of another creature. Each dose of this red-brown liquid requires 1 ounce of blood from the form that is to be assumed, plus a complicated combination of chemicals. Each dose is designed to enable the user to take a distinct form.

A successful Hard **Science (Chemistry)** roll is required to create the serum (a fumbled roll may create a flawed dose with dangerous side effects, such as mutation, permanent assumption of the altered form, and so on). A dose lasts 1D6+10 hours and must be supplemented with further doses

or the user’s appearance reverts to their natural form. Once imbibed, the serum begins to take effect in 1D3 minutes, during which time the user’s statistics and skills are halved (i.e. any rolls are at Hard difficulty); in addition, the user must make a successful **CON** roll or suffer the permanent loss of 1D3 × 5 points of CON. Anyone using the serum loses 1D4 Sanity points per change of form. If a user administers a second dose to change from one assumed form to another, the transformation takes 2D3 minutes to complete and causes 1D3 points of damage to the user. Seeing someone change from one form to another provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss), in addition to any Sanity loss if the new form is particularly monstrous.

Note that the user retains their normal physical characteristics and mass, but outwardly appears in the assumed form. If the assumed form ought to be 10 or more points of SIZ different from the user’s normal form, the difference in height or weight might be noticeable with a **Spot Hidden** roll. Other differences might be noticed if the new form appears weaker, stronger, or clumsier than before, in addition to the more obvious differences in knowledge and personality. If a user is slain, they revert to their natural form in course of 1D3 minutes, causing witnesses to make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss).



Keeper note: assume that serpent people, who are expert in the manufacture of disguise serum, can quickly make a new dose based upon a person's appearance by simply adding that person's blood to the ready-made base serum; however, for investigators, such a procedure takes time (at least 5 minutes) and requires a successful Hard **Science (Chemistry)** roll.

Domination Serum

A colorless serum with the faintest taste of raspberries. No more than ten drops are required for full effect. If a Hard **CON** roll is failed, the target becomes suggestible, but *only* to serpent people. Something in their peculiar smell or the specific intonation of their voices is the key to this suggestibility. The victim will do almost anything for serpent people, short of endangering their own life or the lives of loved ones. The serum metabolizes slowly, taking 1D10+10 days for a victim to be free of its effects, provided no more is imbibed in the meantime.

Explosive Grenade

The grenades are amber-colored crystal cylinders, 4 inches (10 cm) long and 1 inch (2.5 cm) in diameter, with a black triangular mark at each end. The explosive is armed by depressing both ends for a minimum of 5 seconds, creating a delayed explosion 5 seconds later. The ends may be pressed in for up to a minute, which delays the explosion by an equal amount of time. The resultant explosion deals 4D6 damage to all within a 4 yard/meter radius, losing 1D6 of damage per yard/meter beyond that.

Paralysis Grenade

Paralysis grenades resemble explosive grenades, save that they are a pale green color. The arming/timing mechanism works in the same manner as for an explosive grenade. When activated, a pale, greenish cloud of gas is released, affecting all within a 3 yard/meter radius with a paralyzing poison requiring an Extreme **CON** roll to negate its effect. The gas dissipates after 2 rounds. Those who succumb to the poison are unable to move (stunned) for 1D10+5 rounds.

Scrying Crystal

There are two types of crystal involved in this surveillance system. The "sending" or "camera" types are usually milky white spherical globes 6 inches (15 cm) in diameter, while the "receiving/viewing" crystals are clear, diamond-shaped, and usually 4 inches (10 cm) long. The "camera" crystals are positioned in an area to be watched and have a sight range of 10 yards/meters, subject to available lighting, with a 180-degree viewing capability—the user rotates the "receiving" crystal to see in different directions. Each "camera" is attuned to a specific "receiver" or "receiving system," and a receiver can cycle through all "cameras" attuned to it by

tapping on its top. Scrying crystals can send images up to 10 miles (16 km). Larger receiving systems use localized power, while individual receiving crystals use 1 charge per minute of viewing, and usually have 100–1D20 charges. Once activated, receiving crystals create a film-like projection of what is being seen by a given camera crystal. Such images are best viewed if projected onto a wall or flat surface. Receiving systems create wall- or room-sized projections, while handheld receivers create smaller viewable images.

Stupefying Virus

This purple-colored liquid contains the virus created by the serpent people to lower human intelligence. The early version of the virus requires a successful Hard **CON** roll to overcome its effect: the temporary loss of 1D3 × 5 points of INT, EDU, and POW, and 1D6 Sanity points. The effects wear off in 1D4 days (with a fumbled roll the losses are permanent). The virus begins to affect humans 1D6+1 hours after initial exposure. Note that the final version of the virus, described in **Chapter 3: Shattered Earth, Poisoned Sky**, is more potent.

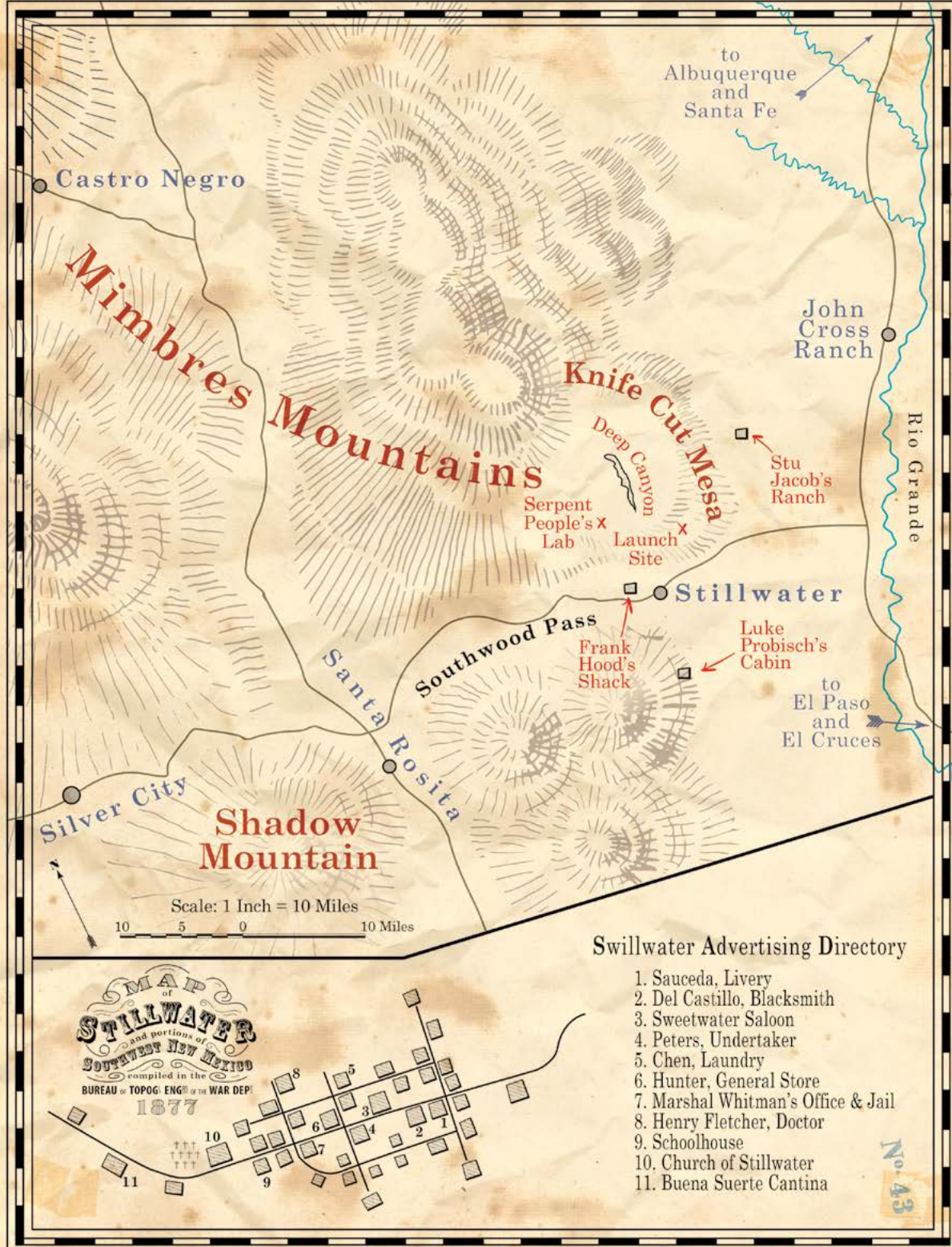
PART ONE: LAZARUS, IN SPADES

Lazarus, in Spades takes place in the fictional town of Stillwater in Doña Ana County, New Mexico, in the desert mountains northwest of Mesilla, not far from the Rio Grande. The adventure assumes that at least one investigator is either currently or was formerly a lawman, judge, or someone with legal authority to apprehend a wanted criminal. Alternatively, the Keeper can change the situation so the scenario's hook adjusts to be a favor for an old friend—the marshal of Stillwater.

KEEPER INFORMATION

Stillwater is a town near to a small enclave of serpent people and their degenerate kin. For the past several months the serpent folk have been experimenting on human subjects abducted from the outlying roads, ranches, and mines. They have developed a virus that gradually erodes human intelligence, and are using rockets fired into the sky over Stillwater to disperse the toxins. The virus has had a variety of effects on the townspeople: some have become forgetful, while others have lost specific memories; a few have become listless and dull-witted, and a few have become crazed. The effects have thus far been minor enough that the outbreak has scarcely been noticed, nor has anyone been overly concerned by the disappearances earlier this year—Mandy Jacobs, a young girl

Keeper Map



Keeper Map

Stillwater and environs map

from a nearby ranch, and Virgil Wright, a prospector from his claim in the western mountains, who were among a handful of subjects abducted and taken to the serpent people's laboratory. The area has also been shaken recently by earth tremors caused by another serpent person facility (see **Chapter 3: Shattered Earth, Poisoned Sky**, for details).

The serpent people have infiltrated Stillwater to observe the effects of their virus firsthand. Months ago, a traveling salesman—actually a disguised serpent person—came through town selling attractive wind chimes, weathervanes, and similar trinkets for a pittance, occasionally even giving away free samples. Some of these trinkets are, in fact, scrying crystals (page 12) that the serpent people can activate and monitor from their laboratory in the mountains. Another serpent person has assumed the form of **Hiram Colby** (page 25), a prospector who occasionally visits the town to sell his silver nuggets (and spy upon the locals).

As the investigators arrive in Stillwater, the serpent folk are preparing to launch more rockets, and the residents are finally starting to realize some of their neighbors have been acting strangely. Soon, an unintended side effect of the serpent folk's virus causes the dead to rise from their graves. While the investigators are attempting to capture their fugitive, they also have to contend with the effects of the

virus on the townspeople—and perhaps themselves—while at the same time tracking down the cause of the phenomena, dodging the risen dead, and trying to keep the suspicious townspeople from killing one another out of misplaced fear.

INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

The marshal of Stillwater, Ted Whitman, has sent word to a judge in the investigators' hometown that the killer Hank Hanratty has been seen in the vicinity. The investigators may have heard of Hanratty, as he is wanted for killing a lawman in their home region. If able, the Keeper may wish to have a former and well-known associate of the investigators be the person killed by Hanratty—perhaps someone they met and worked with during an earlier adventure. The judge deputizes the investigators and sends them to Stillwater with a warrant to bring back Hanratty, dead or alive, saying he will pay them \$600 for the deed. The scenario presumes this set-up is used.

Alternatively, Marshal Ted Whitman could contact the investigators directly. In this case, Whitman's deputy was the person killed by Hanratty, and the lone lawman seeks a favor from the investigators to help bring in the murderer, offering a \$600 reward for the capture of Hanratty, dead or alive.



START: ON TO STILLWATER

Stillwater is fairly easy to find by following the Rio Grande south from Santa Fe or north from El Paso and Mesilla. The little mining town is about 20 miles (32 km) west of the river, in the foothills of the Mimbres Mountains.

As the investigators leave the Rio Grande and head west toward Stillwater, they feel the earth begin to move and the deep rumble of stone. The sudden tremor is nothing serious, just enough to cause the ground to tremble and unnerve the horses.

As an option, the Keeper might have the investigators spy a thin, shambling figure at some great distance, perhaps beyond a deep gorge, disappearing over a distant hilltop, or in some other way inaccessible to the investigators. The lone figure seems to be walking slowly, as if having spent the day in the desert. The sight is foreshadowing: the figure is the first of the dead accidentally reanimated by the serpent folk's virus, the skeletal remains of a long-dead Apache. If the investigators try to pursue the shambling stranger, they should find little more than curious tracks that prove impossible to follow.

STILLWATER, NEW MEXICO

Stillwater, is a small, quiet silver-mining town (population: 300) and includes a handful of outlying ranches. There are several small mines and prospectors' claims in the hills and mountains west and southwest of town, while most of the ranches lie to the east, northeast, and southeast.

Important locations and businesses are described in the following section, along with key NPCs and the important information they can impart. Profiles for important NPCs can be found in **Characters and Monsters**, page 29. Refer to the nearby map of Stillwater, on which several private residences are shown—it's assumed there are dozens more such residences scattered around the town, and the Keeper should feel free to create additional residents as needed.

STILLWATER LOCATIONS

1. Livery

The livery is operated by Roberto "Bob" Saucedo, a friendly 40-year old Mexican who lives with his wife and two children just south of the livery. Saucedo has two (average) riding horses that he rents out for \$10 a day each, or will sell for \$60 apiece.

Keeper note: if necessary, a successful **Luck** roll determines if other Stillwater residents have horses to rent or sell at roughly the same prices.

2. Blacksmith

Joaquin Del Castillo is the town's blacksmith, a stout, quiet, and bearded Mexican in his mid-40s. If the investigators have reason to visit or hire Del Castillo, he doesn't recognize them on subsequent visits—the effect of the serpent people's virus. If questioned about his poor memory, he puts it down to stress but is clearly confused by this obvious mental block.

Keeper note: following the next virus-rocket, Del Castillo forgets how to do his job—the investigators may find him sitting at his forge and fiddling with his tools but not actually working, trying desperately to remember how to do even the simplest chore.

3. Sweetwater Saloon

This two-story saloon is the tamer of the town's two saloons, with the **Buena Suerte Cantina** (page 11) earning the rougher reputation. The Sweetwater is owned by Samuel Phibbs, a stout and balding 45-year old man with a bushy mustache. Phibbs wanted to name the town Sweetwater but was overruled, so he stubbornly gave the name to his saloon instead. As a result of Phibbs' stubbornness (and the serpent people's virus), he always refers to the town as "Sweetwater," despite any and all claims to the contrary.

Phibbs usually tends the bar, but has a younger man, Jason Brand, helping out, as well as two female servers, Patsy West and Molly O'Neill, who are sometimes hired out to privately entertain the local cowboys and prospectors. As a result of the virus, Patsy and Molly can't remember names at all, though this doesn't seem to bother them in the slightest.

There are four rooms for rent on the upper floor (\$1 a night, meals not included). There are deer, cattle, and coyote skulls, rattlesnake hides and rattles nailed to the walls inside and outside the saloon. Several wind chimes and crystal decorations hang from the rafters of the porch outside—two or more of the latter are surveillance devices left by the salesman (disguised serpent person) who passed through several months ago—see **Surveillance** box, page 20.

Garnering Information

Patsy and Molly won't be able to help the investigators find Hank Hanratty, since they don't remember names, and Hank and his brother-in-law Luke Probisch (see **Luke Probisch and his Kin**, page 21) don't use their services anyway. Phibbs is reluctant to talk about his clientele, but a successful social skill roll (**Charm**, **Intimidate**, etc.) or a bribe of at least \$10 gets him (or his bartender Jason Brand) to reveal that Hanratty sometimes comes in with his brother-in-law Luke, who has a mine in the hills south of town somewhere. Alternatively (or in addition), Phibbs or Brand may recall that Luke Probisch's wife, June, comes into town once a week to get supplies from the General Store.

Investigators who are easy with their money and buy plenty of drinks can also pick up on the following town gossip.

- Poor Marty Blanchard lost his mind last week while out riding night watch on a herd. Nobody knows what happened to him, but he's locked up in jail until Doc Fletcher can figure what to do with him.
- "Cruzado" and his Chiricahuas have been seen up on Knife Cut Mesa recently. Everyone figures they've got a hideout of some kind down in Deep Canyon. God help anybody who runs across those bloodthirsty savages. Folks hereabouts reckon they did run off with Stu Jacobs' little daughter Mandy earlier this spring, and they're always taking potshots at miners in the northern mountains.

Keeper note: see **Chapter 2: Trouble on Knife Cut Mesa** for details about Cruzado—whose real name is Taza—and his band of Chiricahua Apache.

- Tim Reynolds says there's an Apache ghost up on the mesa. He saw it late one afternoon while he was riding through. A nasty skeleton-thing that just glared down at him. Reynolds didn't hang about and rode off like the wind.
- These earthquakes have got the cattle and horses up and down the pass all skittish and eating poorly.
- Lee Chen has been setting off his rockets a lot this year; not just on the 4th of July like last year.
- Virgil Wright's been missing for about a month now, probably got jumped by "Cruzado" and his band. Virgil's prospecting neighbors have been up to check his diggings and there's no trace of him. He left his shotgun and tools and everything. Some say that Manny Carlson has been sneaking over and helping himself to Virgil's silver scrapings.
- If you're interested in old trinkets and such, out west of town there's a prospector named Frank Hood who has an interesting collection of stuff he's found in his diggings and ramblings.

4. Undertaker

Rupert "Rupe" Peters, a tall, thin, and bearded man in his 30s, is the undertaker and gravedigger. He sees to all the funeral arrangements in town, hiring a local carpenter to build coffins, getting Reverend Boone to administer services, and digging the graves himself. Rupe has buried everyone who's died in Stillwater since it was founded three years ago. The undertaker's office has a handful of glass ball decorations hanging from the porch roof outside—some of these are surveillance devices.

Keeper note: Rupe recognizes every corpse that gets up and starts rambling around town—and he's deeply upset by the situation (see **The Walking Dead**, page 27). He becomes even more distraught when the virus kicks in and he can't remember their names. Later in the scenario, Rupe might be driven insane and set out with a pistol to start shooting the walking dead, perhaps endangering the living as well unless he's calmed down. He might hurt someone or turn the gun on himself.

5. Lee Chen's Laundry

Lee Chen is a short and chubby Chinese man in his early 40s. With his wife and children, he runs a laundry out of this building. When the locals start pondering the weirdness going on in town, some recall that Lee set off a bunch of fireworks (including exploding rockets) outside of town on the 4th of July last summer.

Keeper note: as their minds start to fail and the dead plague the living, the townsfolk begin to look for a scapegoat, focusing their attention and frustration on Lee Chen. Eventually, a mob forms to burn Lee out of town.

Already fearful of his neighbors, Lee becomes more nervous and furtive when the investigators start poking around. If questioned, he explains in broken English that, "Rockets, no mine! Mine from San Francisco! 4th of July! No now!" He had his fireworks brought in for the 4th of July, hoping his patriotic display would ingratiate himself with the townspeople. Lee has no fireworks right now and, in any case, he has nothing to do with the recent rocket-flares over Stillwater. After the next rocket launch, Lee loses his limited English, leaving him completely unable to reason with the irrational and unruly townsfolk.

6. General Store

Caroline Hunter, a 31-year-old widow, runs this establishment, which carries a range of basics: coffee, flour, bacon, sugar, clothing, rope, lanterns, oil, prospecting and mining tools, some rifles and shotguns, a few revolvers, and ammunition. Hanging inside and outside the store are several wind chimes and decorative baubles—including two of the scrying crystals.

Mrs. Hunter's husband built the store when Stillwater was just getting started, but he was later killed by the Apache, leaving Caroline to run the store alone. Childless and independent, Mrs. Hunter is the focus of attention for those seeking a wife; however, she is tired and wary of strangers and not likely to settle for any man the wind drags in.

Keeper note: the next virus-rocket robs her of the ability to read, which leaves her terribly distraught. Worse, her husband is one of the dead who rises and returns to Stillwater, driving her to her wit's end unless comforted by the investigators.

7. Marshal's Office and Jail

Ted Whitman, age 50, is the local marshal. Old and tired, with a potbelly, bushy mustache, and shaggy gray hair, he's friendly enough but a sourpuss sometimes, especially if riled

up. His office consists of a desk, gun rack (two Winchester rifles, two 12-gauge shotguns, 2 Colt Peacemaker revolvers), and two tiny cells. There are also two surveillance devices here: one hanging from the porch roof outside as part of a wind chime, and another spherical crystal used as a paperweight on Whitman's desk inside.

Other than Marshal Whitman, the only current occupant of the jail is Marty Blanchard, a young cowhand who lost his wits as a result of the serpent people's virus. Blanchard was out "nighthawking" (keeping watch on the ranch after dark) during one of the earlier rocket launches and the next day was found riding his horse, unable to speak, frightened of everyone, and bereft of his senses. He reacted violently when approached and had to be restrained. His friends turned him over to the marshal and Doc Fletcher, who have no idea what to do with him. Poor Blanchard's condition is permanent.

Most days, the marshal only has to deal with fistfights between prospectors and cowboys, or the occasional Chiricahua Apache raid, but things have gotten a little strange lately, and are about to get stranger. Whitman doesn't have a deputy and might deputize the investigators to help control the situation when the dead rise and the townspeople start acting up. Should the newcomers break the law, however, he'll lock them up until he can send them to Mesilla for trial.



Stillwater general store

Keeper note: the next virus-rocket saddles Whitman with severe memory loss and he is unable to carry out his duties or even remember what they should be. He sits in his home or office too weary and puzzled to act. If the investigators take time to look after him and succeed with a combined **Psychology** and **Charm** or **Persuade** roll, they can rekindle some of his memory and rouse him to act.

Asking About Hanratty

Whitman is an acquaintance of the judge in the investigators' hometown and knew of Hank Hanratty's crime there. When he saw Hanratty in Stillwater, he wired the judge with the news. Whitman says he saw Hanratty at the Sweetwater Saloon a couple of times, and he reckons someone there might know where he's holed up. A successful **Law** or **Persuade** roll is needed to convince Whitman to accompany the investigators to serve a warrant on Hanratty.

Keeper note: if the scenario's hook was changed to Marshal Whitman being an old friend who personally summoned the investigators, his deputy Tim Harlan was the man shot in the back and killed one night after he insulted Hanratty in the Buena Suerte Cantina—no one saw who did it, but Whitman believes it was Hanratty. Whether Hanratty actually murdered the deputy is for the Keeper to

decide; such doubt could add a murder mystery layer to the proceedings. Regardless, Hanratty is still wanted for other crimes he did commit.

Asking About Recent Disappearances

Whitman knows about the disappearances of Mandy Jacobs and Virgil Wright, but, like the rest of the townspeople, he believes "the Apaches" made off with them.

8. Doctor Henry Fletcher

Doc Fletcher, age 41, lives alone in this little house. He's tall and thin, gruffly friendly and has a no-nonsense sensibility: he says exactly what he thinks, usually with no regard for people's feelings. He likes hearing news from outside the town and probably will enjoy spending time with the investigators. Normally, he treats disease, injuries, the occasional broken leg or gunshot wound, snakebites, and the like, but the recent weirdness has him stumped. Fletcher thinks the spate of strange behavior may be due to bad food, water, or liquor—but he has no idea which.

During the latter parts of the scenario, the plague of living dead inflames Fletcher with a passion to find its root cause. He tries to examine every "re-killed" corpse he can find, taking samples, conducting experiments, and so forth. At some point, the investigators may hear gunfire near



Marshal Ted Whitman



Doctor Henry Fletcher

Fletcher's house, only to arrive to find the doctor outside shooting animals (dog, rabbit, squirrel, crow, etc.) to perform experiments on them. *"It's only dead humans that are coming back, you see? Why not these critters too? Huh?"*

Keeper note: while Fletcher won't be able to discover the virus causing the plague, he might be able—perhaps with the assistance of a physician- or scientist-investigator's help—to create some sort of antidote or cure for the walking dead. For example, a dust that can be thrown over the zombies to permanently de-animate them—possibly requiring a successful **Science (Biology, Botany, Chemistry, or Pharmacy)** roll combined with a **Luck** roll. Alternatively, a dose of spontaneous **Cthulhu Mythos** use might just be the trick to make Fletcher's "remedy" work. This option may work particularly well if using *Pulp Cthulhu*, and is left for the Keeper to judge based upon the players' schemes and ideas, although it is recommended that dangerous experiments involving "live" test subjects are warranted!

9. Schoolhouse

Stillwater's one-room schoolhouse is located near the edge of town. Hanging from the porch-rafters outside are the by-now-familiar wind chimes (surveillance globes). Donovan Welles, a small and unassuming 25-year-old man, who lives in town with his wife and children, teaches 15 students.

Welles is just as eager as Doc Fletcher to meet out-of-towners for news from the rest of the world. Thanks to the virus, Welles has been forgetful as of late, and the upcoming rocket firing causes him to completely lose his memory: he ends up desperately walking the streets, begging people for help.

10. Church of Stillwater

Reverend Augustus Boone, age 52, leads the small congregation of 19 souls in Stillwater. Tall and sober, Boone wears a stovepipe hat outdoors. When the dead rise, the good reverend proclaims that Judgment Day is coming; worse, he takes up a revolver and goes out shooting down the dead.

The investigators may encounter Mandy Jacobs' mother, Florence, praying in the church. Mandy disappeared from the ranch during the spring and no sign of her has been seen since. Her mother believes she is still alive but is haunted by thoughts of her daughter living among "the Indians." She may appeal to the investigators to help find and return her eldest daughter.

Keeper note: within a day or so of the dead appearing (see **The Walking Dead**, page 27), Boone decides the investigators are the cause of the horrific uprising and tries to rally the people of Stillwater to capture and burn the "Devil's spawn."

Hopefully, the investigators find a peaceful resolution to these accusations (perhaps a successful **Hard Charm, Persuade**, or **Fast Talk** roll), reminding the townspeople that the "fireworks" and mental aberrations started before they arrived. If not, the investigators could find themselves chased out of town, thereafter at the mercy of the walking dead, the serpent people, and the Chiricahua Apache (see **Chapter 2: Trouble on Knife Cut Mesa** for more details of the latter's involvement).

11. Buena Suerte Cantina

This dingy little bar is located on the outskirts of town and is run by Alejandro Vargas, a big, gruff, but friendly Mexican in his early 30s. The clientele tends to be dirty prospectors and rowdy cowboys, but scalp hunters, banditos, and outlaws occasionally pass through. The place is a little rough, but not unfriendly (as long as folks mind their own business).

Investigators who buy a few drinks for the patrons can learn the same rumors and tales told in the **Sweetwater Saloon** (page 15). Poking around in here and asking about Hank Hanratty, however, is a sure way of drawing unwanted attention. If the investigators persist in this line of questioning, someone is liable to become real sore and a fistfight is sure to break out—probably no gunplay, but a good brawl, in any case. Señor Vargas keeps a sawed-off 12-gauge shotgun under



Reverend Augustus Boone



SURVEILLANCE

Scattered throughout Stillwater are dozens of metal and glass baubles, sold to the residents several months ago by a serpent man disguised as a traveling salesman. They are weathervanes (arrows, roosters, and so on), wind chimes, strings of multicolored glass balls and beads, metal or glass paperweights, hanging sculptures of metal, feathers, and rattlesnake rattles, or painted and bead-festooned animal skulls. None of the designs are of any significance whatsoever, either too abstract (random metal shapes) or too banal (depicting common animals) to carry any discernable meaning. A successful **Occult** roll notes that some of the glass balls resemble “witch balls,” which stem from Europe and are believed to provide protection from witchcraft.

If an investigator carefully examines any of the glass or crystal objects, secretly make a **Luck** roll on that investigator's behalf to determine if they have picked one that is actually a surveillance device (**Scrying Crystal**, page 12). The descriptions of certain places in Stillwater (**Locations**, page 15) note where the devices are housed.

Once discovered—by the investigator finding faint silver tracing running through the crystal or glass—a successful **Science (Geology)** or Extreme **Spot Hidden** roll (reduce the difficulty if using equipment to aid vision, such as a magnifying glass) finds the scrying crystals to be unique specimens, some clear, others an opaque white, but all have that same silver tracing within them. A failed roll (and to casual onlookers) mistakes these for worthless silver-mining waste: you can find such things discarded at virtually any mining claim.

In reality, these silver-laced crystals monitor the effect of the virus on the townspeople. The devices in Stillwater are the “camera” devices, not the “viewing” ones used by the serpent people to watch the residents of Stillwater. The serpent folk activate the camera devices at irregular intervals to see what's going on in town, cycling through the differing crystal placements at random, taking notes, and making plans based on what they have seen (preparing defenses, arranging an abduction, and so on).

If one of the scrying crystals is dropped, there is a 50% chance of it being destroyed, while any deliberate attempt to smash one automatically succeeds. A damaged crystal pops and flashes like a burned-out light bulb, leaving the silver traces inside totally charred.

the bar but only uses it if somebody starts shooting up the place. If the investigators stay on his good side, Vargas and his patrons would make good recruits for putting down the dead once they start walking around. Unfortunately, these guys may enjoy the “sport” *too much*—the Keeper may choose to call for a **Sanity** roll when seeing these roughnecks laughing and making wagers as they blow the heads off zombies (0/1D2 Sanity loss, more if it's a former loved one).

OTHER RESIDENTS

The Keeper should create other Stillwater residents as required: clerks, carpenters, farmers, ranch-hands, families, children, and so forth. The investigators may want to talk to the parents of the missing Mandy Jacobs, or the prospector-neighbors of the vanished Virgil Wright, though there won't be much to learn from such people. Most of the residents suffer from some minor mental aberration due to the serpent people's virus. Possible conditions include the following:

- Speech problems (repeating whatever is said to them before replying, spoonerisms, long pauses between words, speaking in gibberish).
- Amnesia or forgetfulness.
- Inane and stupid behavior.
- Inattentiveness.
- Irritability, with possible violent outbursts.
- Homicidal mania.

Most don't realize there is something wrong with them; however, the townspeople eventually turn their attention to Lee Chen (**Lee Chen's Laundry**, page 16), turning him into a scapegoat for the town's ill. For further details about how the investigators may be affected by the virus, see **Effects of the Virus**, page 26.

Prospectors

There are 20–30 prospectors scattered in the hills and mountains south and west of town; the northern reaches are avoided due to the presence of Chiricahua Apache in that area. The prospectors live in shacks, caves, or lean-tos out in the wilderness and tend to be secretive and grouchy. They are all armed and most are very suspicious of strangers, as they fear claim jumpers and road agents.

Many are also afraid of Chiricahua Apache attacks since a few of their number have been killed or scalped in the past. One soul, Duncan Exeter, willingly doffs his hat to the investigators, leering as he shows the bare patch of scar-tissue atop his head—a “present” he got from the Sioux just after the Civil War; the gruesome display might provoke a **Sanity** roll for less-hardened investigators (0/1D2 loss).

Most of the prospectors are unaffected by the virus since the dispersal has been centered on Stillwater. These gruff, unwashed men have little help or useful information to offer the investigators.

Frank Hood

Frank Hood is a young prospector living in a shack in the hills west of town. More of a lackadaisical dreamer than a miner, Hood spends most of his days roaming the hills and mountains. He's accumulated a small collection of American Indian artifacts, which he keeps on shelves in his shack—there are countless arrowheads and pottery shards, and even a couple of intact bowls and jugs (a successful **Archaeology** or **Hard History** roll dates these back to the Mogollon period, at least 500 years ago). There are also two small and badly damaged kachina-like idols (sadly unremarkable). A successful **Anthropology** or **Archaeology** rolls reveals nothing overtly sinister about Hood's collection, although a failed **Occult** or **Cthulhu Mythos** roll might erroneously detect figures or symbols reminiscent of sand dwellers, Yig-worship, or other Mythos entities of the Keeper's choosing. Hood's location and his already dreamy disposition have shielded him, thus far, from the effects of the serpent people's virus.

Asking About Virgil Wright and Mandy Jacobs

Any of the prospectors figure that Wright was abducted or killed by the band of Chiricahua Apache that roam the mountains north of the pass. They think the same of Mandy Jacobs, but suggest the investigators speak to her father, Stu Jacobs, who has a ranch northeast of town (see **Ranchers**, following).

Ranchers

There are a handful of small cattle ranches surrounding Stillwater. These outfits are operated by families with just a few hired hands, with herds of a few dozen head at most. As with the prospectors, those closer to town are more likely to be affected by the virus. Many of the ranchers, especially those north of town, report that the band of Chiricahua Apache, led by a man they call "Cruzado," occasionally comes down from Knife Cut Mesa to steal a cow or two.

Stu Jacobs' Ranch

The Jacobs' ranch is northeast of town; Stu and his wife Florence and their children are heartbroken about the loss of their daughter Mandy earlier this spring. Stu is certain that "Cruzado" and his band took her: *"I thought I saw those filthy savages creeping along the rim of the mesa later that evening."* Stu and a few neighbors went up on Knife Cut Mesa to search for the kidnappers, even delving into Deep Canyon, but they found no trace of Mandy or the Apache.

Stu is still seething and vengeful and might volunteer to lead the investigators up to the mesa if they want to hunt down the Apache kidnappers. Stu's family has been left listless and depressed by the virus, while Stu is moody and ill-tempered, prone to sudden bursts of blind rage.

LUKE PROBISCH AND HIS KIN

Hank Hanratty, the investigators' quarry, has come to Stillwater to live with his sister and work in her husband's mine. Hanratty's hair-trigger temper has gotten him into several scrapes with the law, including the one that sets the investigators on his trail; thus, he has come to the wilderness to hide out and cool off.

Hanratty spends most days working in the mine from dawn to mid-afternoon with his brother-in-law, Luke Probisch. Probisch carries a rifle to work with him, and Hanratty has his revolver. June Probisch, Hanratty's sister, cooks and cleans and performs other chores around the cabin, as well as making a trip to Stillwater for supplies about once a week. On these excursions, she is accompanied by her 14-year old son, Mark, who divides his time between working in the mine, working with his mother around the cabin,



Stu and Florence Jacobs

or gallivanting around the countryside (hunting, fishing, playing). Every 7–10 days or so, Hanratty and Probisch go into town to have a few drinks at the Sweetwater Saloon.

The family lives in a small cabin in the hills a few miles south of Stillwater. The homestead consists of the cabin (kitchen-dining area, Luke and June's bedroom, Mark's bedroom, and a storage room that Hanratty sleeps in), a wood- and toolshed, another shed for foodstuffs, and a barn housing four horses and a buckboard cart. A path leads about a half-mile (800 m) into the steep hills to their silver mine. Alone, Probisch was pulling about \$20–\$50 a month out of the mine, and with Hanratty's help they're getting \$40–\$75 now.

Hank Hanratty, **age 29, miner, outlaw, and murderer**

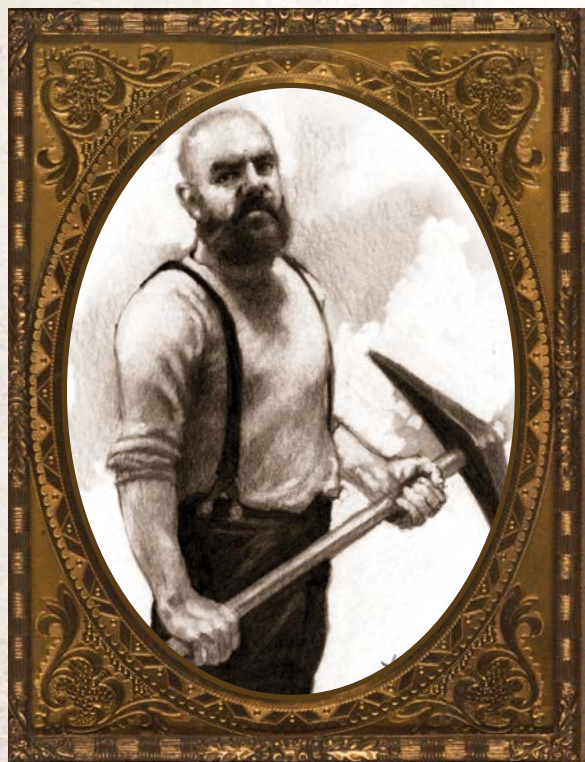
Hanratty's attitude has softened considerably, thanks to the time spent with his family and working the mine. Left to his own devices, he could conceivably abandon his murderous past and become a decent citizen. When the investigators show up he tries to make the case that his crimes were a long time ago (less than two years, actually), and that he's a changed man, and so forth. He means it, but if the investigators insist he'll reluctantly draw his gun and warn them to leave him alone. If they persist, he turns violent once again, hoping to shoot his way to an escape so his family won't be harmed.

- **Description:** tall and powerfully built, with dark eyes and hair. He wears trousers, suspenders, and an undershirt.
- **Traits:** while mellowed with time, he retains a murderous disposition when pushed.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** wanted by the investigators, he will try to bargain and plead his way out of justice, but resorts to violence if necessary. Fearing to bring harm to his family, he aims to escape and run.

Luke Probisch, **age 42, miner, Hanratty's brother-in-law**

Probisch is the law-abiding sort, but is reluctant to turn over his wife's brother to the law. A successful **Law** or **Persuade** roll might be required to remind him that Hanratty is a killer, and a killer of lawmen at that. Then again, if the investigators have harmed Probisch's family, he sides with Hanratty, no matter what.

- **Description:** lean, weathered, and narrow-eyed, he wears sweat-stained clothes, suspenders, and a button-down undershirt.
- **Traits:** temperate and calm, cunning and calculated.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** his family is his first concern; he has no wish to flout the law and may listen to reason. Undue provocation or harm done to his kin causes him to respond in kind; no amount of persuasion gets him to turn himself or his brother-in-law in once his family has been harmed.



Hank Hanratty



Luke Probisch

June Probisch, age 32, miner's wife, Hanratty's sister

Hank Hanratty's older sister; June is protective of him and understandably even more reluctant to give him up to the law than her husband. Probably the only way she'll give him up is if the investigators succeed with a **Law** or **Persuade** roll and Hanratty shows his true colors by blasting at the investigators.

- **Description:** slim, a little worn around the edges, with kind eyes. Dressed simply in work shirt, casual skirt, and apron. Her hair is tied back behind her head, and she usually clutches a shotgun.
- **Traits:** even-handed, hardworking, and not afraid to speak her mind.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** defends her family wholeheartedly, using a shotgun and her husband's revolver if necessary—when the investigators show up, she fires the latter to warn Luke and Hank, if they're up at the mine.

Mark Probisch, age 14, miner's son, Hanratty's nephew

Young Mark Probisch looks up to his uncle Hank, who has regaled him with some of the less murderous of his exploits. Mark defends Hanratty with the rash foolishness of youth, perhaps leading to a tense situation between Mark, his family, and the investigators. He usually totes his .22 rifle when off exploring; otherwise, it's in the cabin.

- **Description:** dark-haired, wild-eyed, and a little tall for his age, dressed in pants, a long-sleeved shirt, and suspenders.
- **Traits:** brash, a risk taker, and quick to anger.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** believes Hanratty to be a hero; does all he can to distract and prevent the investigators from getting his uncle, once he's aware of their intent.

HANRATTY AND THE INVESTIGATORS

How the confrontation with Hanratty and the Probisches comes about and what direction it takes depends on the approach taken by the investigators. If Marshal Whitman is present, the Probisches probably stay out of the fight—unless one of them is attacked. Hanratty almost always wears his gun, but Luke Probisch rarely does, so apprehending the killer in town or the mine is somewhat easier than facing the whole family at the cabin. If the confrontation does take place with the Probisches present, play up the emotions of Hanratty and his nephew Mark, and make the choices difficult for the players.

If Hanratty is taken alive, Doc Fletcher can patch up his wounds (if any), while Whitman can hold him in jail until the investigators are ready to leave town. If Hanratty is killed, Whitman or Doc Fletcher can sign an affidavit confirming his death, allowing the investigators to claim their reward—the bad news is that the slain Hanratty (and anyone else killed by the investigators) rises with the rest of dead a day or two later (see **The Walking Dead**, page 27).

Pulp: the Keeper should note the pulp talents and Luck values given to both Hanratty and Luke Probisch (see page 32).



June and Mark Probisch

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Much of the rest of this scenario is sandbox in nature, allowing the investigators to explore and investigate Stillwater in their pursuit of Hank Hanratty, all while the other key events take place. A suggested **Timeline of Events** (box, nearby) shows a possible schedule, subject to the investigators' actions. Presumably, their first day is spent settling into town, conferring with the marshal, and having a look around. The next day, they'll start looking for Hanratty, who's easily found, if not so easily dealt with. By this time, the townsfolk's idiosyncrasies should have piqued the investigators' interest, and that night's unscheduled "fireworks display" should raise further suspicions, especially when the dead start rising from the town churchyard the following day. After the fireworks, the townsfolk act even stranger, and more tremors rock the region. Hopefully, these weird events are enough to lure the investigators into the mystery surrounding Stillwater—especially if one or more of their number is suffering from the effects of the serpent people's virus.

There is no clear "end" to this first adventure, no real enemy to be found and fought, and no ritual to stop. Once the investigators start looking around, trying to track the source of the weirdness, this scenario segues immediately into **Chapter 2: Trouble on Knife Cut Mesa**. Eventually, the trail the investigators are following leads them beyond Stillwater, though they'll probably return there frequently.

KEY EVENTS

The following section details the key events transpiring after the investigators arrive in Stillwater. As suggested by the **Timeline of Events**, the Keeper should alter their sequence as desired.

Key events are:

- **Earthquakes**, following.
- **Hiram Colby**, page 25.
- **Townsfolk Strangeness**, page 26.
- **Fireworks**, page 26.
- **The Walking Dead**, page 27.

EARTHQUAKES

The serpent people, housed in their facility near Santa Rosita, some 35 miles (56 km) west of Stillwater, are creating a volcano within Shadow Mountain to unleash and disperse the virus.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

This is a suggested sequence of events: feel free to adapt and change to better suit the pace the investigators are taking. Once the investigators leave Stillwater for Knife Cut Mesa, move immediately into **Chapter 2**.

Days 1–2: earth tremor; strange wandering figures (walking dead) seen in the distance. Investigators arrive in Stillwater, meet with marshal, and find lodgings. Hiram Colby comes to town.

Days 2–3: investigators find and attempt to apprehend Hanratty; earth tremor; townsfolk acting weird. That night, rocket launched from Knife Cut Mesa. Rainstorm.

Day 4+: more townsfolk acting weird; earth tremor; the dead rise and start walking.

Day 5: walking dead; townsfolk weirdness, virus' effects increase. Reverend Boone blames the investigators. Lee Chen persecuted by townspeople.

Day 6: as Day 5, plus Doc Fletcher starts experimenting on the dead.

Day 7: more dead rising, more weirdness; earth tremor.

Day 8: repeat as needed.

To accomplish this goal, the serpent folk have engineered a number of burrowing creatures (see **The Burrowing Horrors**, page 90) to rupture the Earth's crust, allowing magma to push upward and eventually to burst forth in a full-blown eruption. For now, the burrowers' activities are merely causing occasional earth tremors—the ultimate effect of the burrowers on Santa Rosita are discussed in the final part of the campaign (**Chapter 3: Shattered Earth, Poisoned Sky**).

In Stillwater, the tremors' effects are mild, and while disturbing at first, the townsfolk have gotten used to them. Recently, there have been one or two tremors a week: the ground shakes, and windows, plates, and loose items rattle, but no real damage as yet. Horses and other animals are spooked when a tremor occurs, with mounted individuals perhaps requiring a successful **Ride** or **Animal Handling** roll to prevent being thrown to the ground.

Following the arrival of the investigators in Stillwater, the tremors grow more frequent, occurring every 2–3 days or so. They do not grow in severity (yet), but their increased frequency alarms the townspeople, making them more prone to look for scapegoats, such as Lee Chen or the investigators.

The Keeper should inject tremors into the scenes as desired, adding unexpected tension to an already volatile situation, such as during the confrontation with Hank Hanratty, the accusations of Reverend Boone, or when battling the undead.

HIRAM COLBY

Hiram Colby enters Stillwater on the same day as the investigators. Colby is a shabbily dressed prospector who digs northwest of town. He comes to town every few weeks to spend his silver and buy supplies. In reality, Colby is a serpent man using the disguise serum (page 11) to take human form so that he may keep an eye on developments in Stillwater. Specifically, on this occasion, Colby wishes to witness the effect the next rocket launch (and its virus payload) has on the townsfolk.

On arrival, Colby heads to the Buena Suerte Cantina to buy a couple of drinks and listen to the local gossip. Folks in town know him, but he has no friends. To most, he's just another wily prospector who keeps to his own counsel. After spending a few hours in the cantina, Colby moves on to the

Sweetwater Saloon to eavesdrop some more. He eventually takes a room above the saloon and sleeps. Sometime after noon the next day, he rises and reconnoiters the town, repeating his rounds and learning as much as he can about the activities of the locals.

There is really no reason the investigators should pay any mind to Colby at first, as he looks and acts like the dozen or so other prospectors who pass through Stillwater at any given time; however, their suspicion may be piqued due to the following things concerning Colby.

- First, dogs bark and horses shy away when Colby is near—Colby says he and critters don't get along.
- Investigators staying at the Sweetwater Saloon may hear a strange soft voice issuing from Colby's room in the middle of the night (when using his communication crystal)—Colby says it's his snoring.
- The investigators may spot Colby standing motionless in the hot sun—nothing like the warm sunlight, he says.
- Finally, he seems to take a keen interest in the actions of the townspeople following the “fireworks display,” and is even more entranced by the appearance of the risen dead, perhaps helping to shoot a few of them down.

If Colby is forced into a confrontation, he uses his spells and devices to make his escape, perhaps even using a beam weapon crystal to shoot his way out of town. If captured alive, his disguise serum eventually wears off, exposing him as a serpent person. In this event, those who fail a **Sanity** roll (0/1D6 loss) may be momentarily stunned when Colby's true nature is revealed. In any event, Colby won't reveal anything about what he's up to, or what is happening in and around Stillwater. The serpent man is merely a spy and fatalistic about his duty toward his species: he may die, but he believes the plans of his fellows will succeed, and his race will triumph in the end. Should Colby be killed in human form, he slowly reverts to his normal ophidian form, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1D6 loss). If Colby escapes, he may reappear in a different guise in the next chapter.

- **Description:** a wiry little man with creased, sun-browned features beneath a scraggly beard and shaggy blond hair. He dresses in ratty buckskin clothes, worn leather boots, and a battered Union Army kepi cap. An old cap-and-ball .44 Colt Army revolver hangs from his belt, while a .56 Spencer carbine rifle is slung over his shoulder. Over the other shoulder is a fringed deer hide bag containing dried foodstuffs, flint and steel, a knife, ammunition, and two stiff leather pouches (each holding \$50 worth of silver nuggets).
- **Traits:** quiet; always responds to a question with a question.



Hiram Colby

- **Devices:** Colby carries some small leather pouches containing a beam weapon crystal, an armor crystal, and a communication crystal, as well as vials containing the domination serum (12 doses), disguise serum (8 doses: Hiram Colby × 6, and another male human form × 2), and three paralysis grenades—see **Technological Devices of the Serpent People**, page 10, for details on all of these.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Colby's actions and behavior may alert the investigators to keep an eye on him. If Colby is pressed by an investigator, he may use domination serum to quell such suspicion or use the serum on other townsfolk to "create" allies to set against the investigators.

Colby's profile can be found in the **Characters and Monsters** section, page 33.

TOWNSFOLK STRANGENESS

The investigators' encounters with the various people of Stillwater should be used to hint at the odd goings-on in the region. Thanks to the virus, the residents are slowly losing their wits. Many are, at least, forgetful; others are easily distracted; some lethargic and slow, dull-witted, or downright stupid. Some, including Marty Blanchard, have degenerated into simpletons. Most of these people's conditions may eventually wear off—if the introduction of the virus can be stopped. The next rocket launch is already set (see **Fireworks**, following), but if the creatures are allowed to launch another one to two virus-laden rockets, the condition of those in Stillwater will be irreversible.

Once they arrive, the investigators should gradually notice that the locals are a little strange. After the **Fireworks** event, the townspeople behave even more strangely, so there should be no question (in the investigators' eyes) that something is wrong in Stillwater. To make matters worse, the investigators themselves may be affected by the virus after the rocket launch (see **Effects of the Virus**, page 26).

FIREWORKS

Within a couple of days of the investigators' arrival in Stillwater, the serpent people plan to launch another series of virus-carrying rockets from the mesa north of town. Their spy, Hiram Colby, comes to town a day or two before that, to monitor the effects of the virus on the townspeople.

At 10:00 pm on the night of the launch, the serpent people send out trognophides (see **Chapter 2, Watchers on the Mesa**, page 37) to make sure no one is about to see or interfere with their plans. If someone is there, the twisted creatures aim to frighten or lure such intruders away. Failing

this, they attack if they greatly outnumber the intruders; otherwise, they call for their masters to deal with the problem, or the launch may have to be rescheduled.

Once Knife Cut Mesa is deemed safe, two serpent people (#2 and #3 from **Chapter 2**, equipped with weapons, communication devices, and a telescope) depart from their facility in the nearby mountains, accompanied by over a dozen trognophides, who carry the launch apparatus and a dozen virus-laden rockets. Keeping a watch for intruders, anyone encountered by the procession is mercilessly hunted down and killed.

Back in the mountain facility, other serpent people use surveillance devices to watch Stillwater, using their communication crystals to warn the rocket group if any townsfolk begin to head to the mesa. Barring interruption, the rocket group assembles the rockets at the edge of Knife Cut Mesa, a little over 1 mile (1.6 km) north of Stillwater. While the trognophides guard the perimeter, one serpent person surveys the area through the telescope while the other launches the rockets in groups of two to explode over the town below. The crafty scientists pause after the first couple of rockets, waiting for more townspeople to come out into the streets to watch the "fireworks display"—the better to infect the stupid, easily amused apes with the airborne virus. The rocket launches continue, bursting overhead in colorful showers of red, orange, and white sparks. The people of Stillwater stand in wonder, emitting "oohs" and "ahhs" at each explosion. Onlookers speculate whether Lee Chen is shooting his fireworks off early this year or if crazed prospectors are having a lark. Some suggest that the Chiricahuas are trying to lure victims out to be scalped, or if road agents are signaling to accomplices. Anyone using a telescope to scan the mesa might, at best, see a few dark humanoid silhouettes briefly illuminated in the flash of the rocket launches, but it's too far away to make out details. About ten minutes after they started, the fireworks stop, and the serpent people hurry back to their facility in the mountains. The trognophides cover up their trail by brushing out tracks and making a false trail down into Deep Canyon.

Effects of the Virus

Anyone within 4 miles (6 km) of Stillwater (including the investigators) is subject to the effects of the airborne virus. Those in the area of effect must succeed with a **CON** roll or temporarily lose 1D3 × 5 points of INT, EDU, and POW (roll for each characteristic) and 1D6 Sanity points. If the **CON** roll is fumbled, such losses are permanent; otherwise, the effects wear off in 1D6+1 days. The virus' effects begin roughly around noon of the following day—about the same time as the dead start rising from their graves.

Affected investigators are stricken with the same afflictions they might have noticed in the townspeople. The Keeper should determine what condition affects each investigator who failed the CON roll, choosing or rolling 1D6 from the list below.

1. Memory gaps (a Hard **EDU** roll is required to remember important details).
2. Distracted (a Hard **INT** roll is required to keep focused; otherwise the investigator wanders off for some reason).
3. Speech problem (a Hard **INT** roll is required when imparting important information; otherwise, the investigator repeats whatever has just been said to them or speaks in gibberish).
4. Imbecility (all mental skill rolls are at Hard difficulty or suffer a penalty die).
5. Irritability, with possible violent outbursts (bouts of madness provoke angry outbursts, and so on).
6. Phobia or mania (drawn from pages 160 and 161 of the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*).

If the investigators decide to head up to the mesa to see who is responsible for the fireworks, they are almost certainly going to be too late to catch the serpent people in the act. By the time horses have been rounded up, gear fetched, and the investigators have ridden to the base of Knife Cut Mesa, the serpent people have finished their work and left. Even then, it takes another ten minutes or so to find and follow a path (Hard **Navigate** or **Track** roll in the darkness) up to the top of the mesa, and then more long and laborious minutes to track the mysterious pyrotechnicians—see **Investigatin'** (following) for what the investigators might find when they search the mesa. It's probably after 11:00 pm by this point, and the night is cooling quickly.

Investigators may recall comments about Chiricahua Apache and bandits in the hills; perhaps this search would be better conducted by daylight? If the investigators insist on following the trail by night, the Keeper is free to have Chiricahua Apache or the trognophides attack (see **The Chiricahua Apache** and **Watchers on the Mesa** in **Chapter 2**). The investigators could be captured by either group, necessitating a rescue or escape. Ideally, captured investigators are taken by the serpent men and imprisoned in their facility (see **Chapter 2, The Vipers' Nest**, page 45).

In any event, an hour after the "fireworks" finish, clouds build up and rain begins to fall, continuing off and on for the next 12 hours. The rain is cold and slightly sticky, with a faint, unidentifiable chemical odor.

Pulp: in addition to the effects described, the Keeper could have the virus reduce Luck values by half.

THE WALKING DEAD

The morning after the rocket firing the situation in Stillwater grows stranger and then turns downright grisly and deadly. By noon, folks (perhaps including the investigators) are displaying the effects of the virus. About that same time, the dead start rising from their graves.

There are a total of around 20 dead buried in the Stillwater cemetery alongside the church. Around six are the remains of early settlers; another six were killed in mining or other accidents, four were killed by violence (feuds, robberies), and the rest died of disease or natural causes. Within a 15-mile (24 km) radius of the town there are another 20 lost, nameless, and unburied dead: Apache, early prospectors, and maybe a soldier or traveler. One of these may already have been seen or encountered by the investigators when they first approached Stillwater (**Start: On to Stillwater**, page 15); however, the rest of the dead are only now beginning to rise—an unexpected side effect of the virus.

The first to rise are the most recently deceased, at the rate of one every hour or so. The dead struggle out of their graves and shamle about, with half of them attempting to go back to significant locations, such as their homes or places of business as if they are unaware that they are dead. The others awaken hungry and seek out the living to assuage their appetite. The recently deceased should be treated as zombies, animated corpses in varying states of decay, from ashen-faced and intact shamblers to wasted and parchment-thin skinned things. Profiles for a selection of **Risen Dead: Fresh** can be on page 35 in the **Characters and Monsters** section.

Later that same evening, and over the next few days, the longer-dead rise; these creatures are far less intact and even less human-looking, being clattering collections of bone, sinew, and rags—treat these as skeletons, all of which seek to destroy the living (see **Risen Dead: Skeletal**, page 34, for their profiles).



PULP: ZOMBIES

For *Pulp Cthulhu* games, double the number of walking dead, but feel free to increase this number. While the zombies are not a great threat on their own to pulp heroes, large numbers of them can be problematic. Also, having the risen dead suddenly appear while the heroes are involved in some other problem or encounter helps to complicate matters.



CHAPTER I

A Shambling Entrance

The investigators may be drawn to the appearance of the first zombie when it shambles into Stillwater, its undead howl causing a disturbance. This one isn't hungry and merely tries to go into the Sweetwater Saloon for a drink. Somebody recognizes him—“Hey, that's Barney McGill! Ain't he dead?”—but whether that occurs before or after one of the locals starts shooting the walking corpse is up to the Keeper. Minutes after the first one is seen, another starts down the road from the cemetery; however, this one's hungry for any kind of vittles it can get its teeth into, including human flesh. More follow in the hours to come. Later, the more ragged ones start to come down from the surrounding hills and mountains.

The Keeper should stage the appearances and attacks of the undead to create maximum fear and confusion. After the first couple of walking corpses are dealt with, several hours pass before others are seen. People begin barricading their homes and businesses, shooting at strangers (remember, the virus is also affecting the townspeople), and some go hunting the dead. Night comes early, and with it more horrors tearing at barricaded buildings or climbing onto roofs seeking those inside. Dread falls on Stillwater.

The investigators may think to post sentries at the churchyard to blast the things apart as they rise (a wise strategy). Guards

might also be posted at the edges of town to stop outliers from getting through. These steps make it even more frightening when one of the dead does slip through the defenses.

Keeper note: keep a track of each investigator's successful Sanity rolls for encountering the undead. After six successful rolls, they will have become used to the horror, and do not need to roll again during this campaign when seeing more zombies—the only exception is if a walking corpse was known and liked by the investigator, in which case roll normally.

The undead plague continues for the remainder of the campaign, though its later effects are lessened by the fact that there aren't enough dead in the region to constitute much of a long-term threat. It's worth noting, however, that any human who dies during these scenarios is destined to rise again as a zombie. The only way to prevent reanimation is to burn the body. Sanity loss for seeing the “fresh” risen dead is 1/1D8 points (1D3/1D6+2 loss if the person was known to the witness), and 0/1D6 loss for seeing the skeletal dead.

Note that once killed, the dead stay dead. After a few weeks, the virus has dispersed and the dead no longer reanimate (probably...).



Fireworks over Stillwater

CONCLUSION: WHEN FOOLS AND CORPSES COLLIDE

The combination of the virus' effects on the residents of Stillwater and the appearance of the undead hopefully results in all manner of interesting events. Townspeople may mistake their shambling, dull-witted, virus-stricken living neighbors for the reanimated dead. Sadistic ruffians may start competitions to see who can kill the most walking corpses. Desperate and suspicious citizens may turn against their neighbors, such as Lee Chen, not to mention Reverend Boone's crusade against the investigators. New friends and acquaintances (Marshal Whitman and Caroline Hunter) may suffer due to the effects of the virus or the reappearance of deceased loved ones. Others, such as Doc Fletcher, may seek answers and remedies, or try to offer some assistance. Hiram Colby may try to enflame the locals' suspicion of the newcomers, perhaps using domination serum on citizens or the investigators to cause conflicts. The Keeper should keep the investigators scrambling from one event to another.

INVESTIGATING

There are many avenues of inquiry to follow in this adventure but, unfortunately, most of them lead to dead ends. Lee Chen is not responsible for the mysterious fireworks over the town; Frank Hood's artifact collection is completely mundane, and the local disappearances offer no clues as to who took them or why. If the investigators can make their way through the increasingly befuddled citizens and the shambling dead, they hopefully know enough to be drawn to Knife Cut Mesa to seek new clues—and the solution to the mysteries shadowing Stillwater.

Onward and Upward?

The investigators begin the second adventure in this campaign, **Chapter 2: Trouble on Knife Cut Mesa**, as soon as they venture onto the mesa north of town. Because the second adventure follows the events of the first so closely, the investigators will not have time for a Development Phase, so increasing their skills is not an option for the time being. The Keeper may, at their discretion, grant the following Sanity rewards—assuming these key tasks have been accomplished by the time they head out of Stillwater.

- Capturing Hank Hanratty: +1 Sanity point (increased to +2 if achieved without bloodshed).

- Dealing death or injury to the Probisches: -1 Sanity point (if all 3 are killed, increase the loss to -1D3+1 points).
- Helping Marshal Whitman to maintain order in town: +1D3 Sanity points (no reward if Whitman dies).
- Trying to help or alleviate the effects of the virus on Stillwater residents: +1 Sanity point.
- Assisting Doc Fletcher with his experiments: +1D3 Sanity points.
- Aiding Caroline Hunter: +1 Sanity point.
- Aiding and saving Lee Chen: +1 Sanity point.
- Exposing and dealing with Hiram Colby: +1D6 Sanity points.
- Hiram Colby is exposed but escapes: no reward.
- For saving any townsfolk from certain death by the undead: +1 Sanity point.
- Killing the undead: + 1D3 Sanity points (maximum).

Lastly, don't forget that investigators affected by the virus will recover lost characteristic points and come to their senses in 1D6+1 days—unless a fumbled result means the effects were permanent.

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

Characters are grouped by association; note that some include a Luck value and pulp talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games, which can be ignored for *Call of Cthulhu*.

STILLWATER RESIDENTS

Ted Whitman, age 50, marshal

STR 65	CON 65	SIZ 75	DEX 60	INT 65
APP 55	POW 60	EDU 60	SAN 55	HP 14
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 5	MP: 12	

Combat

Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4
.45 Colt revolver	60% (30/12), damage 1D10+2
.44-40 Winchester rifle	50% (25/10), damage 2D6+1
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Skills

Charm 40%, Intimidate 45%, Law 55%, Listen 40%, Navigate 45%, Persuade 50%, Language (English) 45%, Psychology 50%, Ride 45%, Spot Hidden 50%, Status 50%, Stealth 45%, Track 45%, Throw 45%.

CHAPTER I

Doctor Henry Fletcher, age 41, physician

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 55 INT 70
APP 45 POW 70 EDU 80 SAN 66 HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 14

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
or scalpel 1D4+1D4
.36 Colt Navy revolver 35% (17/7), damage 1D10
Dodge 27% (13/5)

Skills

First Aid 70%, History 40%, Language (English) 70%, Language (Latin) 30%, Library Use 45%, Listen 35%, Medicine 55%, Natural World 35%, Persuade 45%, Psychology 55%, Science (Biology) 60%, Science (Chemistry) 60%, Science (Pharmacy) 70%, Stealth 45%.

Lee Chen, age 44, launderer

STR 60 CON 70 SIZ 65 DEX 65 INT 65
APP 60 POW 60 EDU 65 SAN 60 HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4
or club 1D6+1D4
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Accounting 60%, Fast Talk 45%, Psychology 45%, Language (Chinese) 65%, Language (English) 20%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Persuade 30%, Spot Hidden 35%, Stealth 40%, Throw 80%.

Caroline Hunter, age 31, storekeeper

STR 55 CON 70 SIZ 55 DEX 65 INT 70
APP 65 POW 60 EDU 65 SAN 60 HP 12
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 12

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
16-gauge shotgun (DB) 40% (20/8), damage
2D6+2/1D6+1/1D4
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Accounting 50%, Art/Craft (Sewing) 40%, Charm 60%, Fast Talk 65%, History 30%, Psychology 50%, Listen 55%, Persuade 55%, Language (English) 65%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 55%, Throw 40%.

Reverend Augustus Boone, age 52, preacher

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 55 DEX 55 INT 60
APP 55 POW 65 EDU 70 SAN 64 HP 11
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6 MP: 13

Combat

Brawl 55% (27/11), damage 1D3
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Charm 35%, History 40%, Intimidate 45%, Language (English) 65%, Library Use 35%, Listen 35%, Lore (Christianity) 60%, Occult 45%, Persuade 65%, Psychology 50%, Stealth 60%.

Stu Jacobs, age 39, rancher, vengeful father

STR 70 CON 75 SIZ 70 DEX 60 INT 60
APP 65 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 48 HP 14
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 65% (32/13), damage 1D3+1D4
.44-40 Remington revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D10+2
.44 Henry rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Climb 40%, Drive Wagon 45%, Fast Talk 45%, First Aid 40%, Intimidate 45%, Language (English) 50%, Mechanical Repair 45%, Natural World 65%, Navigate 45%, Psychology 35%, Ride 60%, Rope Use 65%, Stealth 60%, Throw 40%, Track 35%, Trap 60%.

MISCELLANEOUS TOWNSPEOPLE OF STILLWATER

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	55	50	65	60	45	65	60	55	50	80
CON	60	55	70	75	55	60	65	65	55	55
SIZ	65	55	50	65	60	65	60	70	65	80
DEX	45	55	65	50	55	60	65	60	70	50
INT	60	65	60	55	65	70	70	60	65	55
POW	50	45	55	45	60	60	55	45	50	55
APP	50	55	40	60	55	70	65	55	50	50
EDU	40	45	50	60	60	65	55	60	55	45
SAN	50	43	50	40	58	59	54	45	50	55
HP	12	11	12	14	11	12	12	13	12	13
DB	0	0	0	+1D4	0	+1D4	0	+1D4	0	+1D4
Build	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Move	7	8	9	7	7	8	8	7	8	8
MP	10	9	11	9	12	12	11	9	10	11

Combat

Brawl

60% (30/12), damage 1D3+DB

(#1-#4) .36 Colt Navy revolver

40% (20/8), damage 1D10

(#8-#10) 16-gauge shotgun (DB)

40% (20/8), damage 2D6+2/1D6+1/1D4

Dodge

30% (15/6)

Skills

Fast Talk 35%, Intimidate 30%, Persuade 40%, Psychology 30%, Language (English) 45%.

HANRATTY AND PROBISCH CLAN

Hank Hanratty, age 29, miner, outlaw, and murderer

STR 75 CON 65 SIZ 75 DEX 65 INT 60
APP 65 POW 60 EDU 55 SAN 52 HP 14
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 12 Luck: 30

Combat

Brawl 75% (37/15), damage 1D3+1D4
.45 S&W revolver 55% (27/11), damage 1D10+2
.44-40 Winchester '73 rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Pulp Talents

- **Alert:** never surprised in combat.
- **Fleet Footed:** spend 10 Luck points to avoid being outnumbered in melee for 1 round.

Skills

Climb 60%, Fast Talk 50%, Gambling 35%, Intimidate 50%, Listen 45%, Language (English) 35%, Language (Spanish) 15%, Natural World 45%, Psychology 45%, Ride 60%, Rope Use 50%, Science (Geology) 15%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 60%.

Luke Probisch, age 42, miner, Hanratty's brother-in-law

STR 75 CON 70 SIZ 70 DEX 60 INT 65
APP 60 POW 60 EDU 50 SAN 60 HP 14
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 12 Luck: 30

Combat

Brawl 60% (12/5), damage 1D3+1D4
or pickaxe 1D8+1D4
.36 Colt Navy revolver 35% (17/7), damage 1D10
.44 Henry rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
Dodge 50% (25/10)

Pulp Talents

- **Nimble:** does not lose next action when diving for cover.
- **Tough:** spend 10 Luck points to shrug off up to 5 points of damage.

Skills

Climb 50%, First Aid 40%, Intimidate 40%, Jump 55%, Language (English) 50%, Listen 40%, Mechanical Repair 55%, Natural World 40%, Persuade 45%, Psychology 50%, Ride 35%, Rope Use 45%, Science (Geology) 45%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 40%.

June Probisch, age 32, miner's wife, Hanratty's sister

STR 60 CON 70 SIZ 60 DEX 65 INT 65
APP 60 POW 70 EDU 60 SAN 70 HP 13
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 14 Luck: 35

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3
.36 Colt Navy revolver 25% (12/5), damage 1D10
16-gauge shotgun (DB) 30% (15/6), damage
2D6+2/1D6+1/1D4
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Accounting 35%, Charm 40%, First Aid 55%, Language (English) 45%, Listen 50%, Natural World 45%, Psychology 40%, Spot Hidden 50%, Science (Geology) 15%, Stealth 60%.

Mark Probisch, age 14, miner's son, Hanratty's nephew

STR 40 CON 50 SIZ 45 DEX 75 INT 55
APP 60 POW 50 EDU 40 SAN 50 HP 9
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 10

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3
.22 lever-action rifle 45% (22/9), damage 1D6+1
Dodge 65% (32/13)

Skills

Charm 30%, Climb 70%, Fast Talk 45%, Jump 65%, Natural World 40%, Navigate 35%, Language (English) 40%, Ride 30%, Rope Use 35%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 55%, Trap 40%.

MONSTERS

Hiram Colby, prospector, disguised serpent man

STR 50 CON 55 SIZ 60 DEX 70 INT 80
 APP (45)* POW 65 EDU (55)* SAN — HP 11
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 13 Luck: 30

*Human disguise.

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (as human: weapon, unarmed; as serpent: weapon, bite, claw)

Poison: in serpent form, the bite is highly venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D8 damage.

Devices: Colby carries a beam weapon crystal, an armor crystal, and a communication crystal, as well as vials containing the domination serum (12 doses), disguise serum (8 doses: Hiram Colby × 6, and another male human form × 2), and three paralysis grenades—see **Technological Devices of the Serpent People**, page 10.

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage 1D3
.44 Colt Army revolver	30% (15/6), damage 1D10+2
.56 Spencer carbine rifle	40% (20/8), damage 2D6+3
Beam weapon crystal	50% (25/10), damage 1D8
Paralysis grenade	60% (30/12), stunned for 1D10+5 rounds (Extreme CON roll negates)
Bite (serpent form)	35% (17/7), damage 1D8+poison
Dodge	50% (25/10)

Skills

Anthropology 55%, Climb 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 50%, Fast Talk 45%, History 70%, Jump 35%, Language (English) 60%, Language (Naacal) 80%, Listen 40%, Mechanical Repair 55%, Medicine 40%, Natural World 45%, Occult 45%, Psychology 30%, Science (Biology) 25%, Science (Chemistry) 40%, Science (Geology) 20%, Science (Pharmacy) 50%, Spot Hidden 45%. Stealth 45%.

Armor: 1-point scales. Armor crystal provides 10 points of armor for 5 rounds.

Spells: Cloud Memory, Enthrall Victim, Fist of Yog-Sothoth.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see Hiram Colby's true serpent form.

NEW WEAPON FOR DOWN DARKER TRAILS

Weapon	Damage	Base Range	Uses per Round	Bullets	Malfunction	Cost	Availability
.22 Lever-Action Rifle	1D6+1	30	1/3	9	99	\$7	Common



SKELETAL RISEN DEAD OF STILLWATER

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	45	55	60	50	65	55	40	60	65	70
CON	40	50	60	60	55	65	65	70	65	60
SIZ	60	65	65	70	55	45	55	65	70	75
DEX	60	65	55	50	65	65	60	55	50	60
POW	05	05	05	05	05	05	05	05	05	05
HP	10	11	12	13	11	11	12	13	13	13
DB	0	0	+1D4	0	0	0	0	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4
Build	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Move	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7

Combat**Attacks per Round:** 1 (claw, bite)

Fighting 40% (20/8), damage 1D4+DB

Dodge n/a

Resistant: apply one penalty die for attacks made with an impaling weapon (inc. bullets). A striking blow can destroy a skeleton: take the damage caused by a single blow and multiply it by five, then roll 1D100; if the result is equal to or below the multiplied damage value, the corpse is destroyed; otherwise, ignore damage result.

Skills

Climb 44%, Sense Life 40%, Stealth 30%.

Armor: none.

Spells: none; ignore damage results that do not destroy the skeleton (see Resistant, above).

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see the skeletal dead.

FRESH RISEN DEAD OF STILLWATER

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	85	80	90	75	85	90	95	75	80	90
CON	85	85	95	80	90	95	80	90	95	80
SIZ	65	60	70	65	70	80	55	50	60	70
DEX	20	25	40	30	35	40	40	45	30	35
POW	05	05	05	05	05	05	05	05	05	05
HP	15	14	16	14	16	17	13	14	15	15
DB	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D6	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4
Build	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
Move	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (claw, bite)

Fighting 35% (17/7), damage 1D4+DB

Dodge n/a

Skills

Fast Talk 35%, Intimidate 30%, Persuade 40%, Psychology 30%, Language (English) 45%.

Armor: none; impaling weapons deal only 1 damage, while all other attacks deal half damage; major wounds delivered to the body result in the loss of a limb; decapitation kills outright (one penalty die to rolls targeting the head).

Spells: none.

Sanity loss: 1/1D8 Sanity points to see the fresh dead; 1D3/1D6+2 if a former close associate/relation.



The fresh risen dead



THE SHADOW OVER STILLWATER PART 2: TROUBLE ON KNIFE CUT MESA

Part Two of *The Shadow Over Stillwater* begins when the investigators leave Stillwater to venture onto Knife Cut Mesa north of town to discover the origin of the “fireworks” launched from there, and who or what is causing the strange behavior of the townsfolk. If the walking dead and the virus-stricken townspeople weren’t enough, things are about to get much, much worse.

KEEPER INFORMATION

On Knife Cut Mesa, the investigators find several tracks and trails, some made by a band of Chiricahua Apache living in the mountains northwest of Stillwater. Their leader, Taza, has no love for the white man, who has pushed the Chiricahua into the mountains. However, he and his people also face the threat posed by the area’s other inhabitants: the degenerate trognophides and their recently awakened atavistic masters. The Chiricahua have skirmished with the degenerate serpents but have only glimpsed the true serpent people that now lead them. Some of Taza’s band have been abducted by the serpent people for experimentation with the debilitating virus.

Other trails lead into Deep Canyon, where the trognophides once made their home. The shunned canyon retains signs of these creatures, and a few of the most degraded serpents still dwell in the canyon’s warrens.

Yet another trail leads into the mountains, this one well concealed by the serpent people and their slouching, slithering kin. Within the mountains is the lair of the serpent people, where they slept for millennia. Now awakened, they have set to work to rebuild their civilization. Their technicians have constructed crystal-based weapons and defenses, and their laboratories have manufactured

the virus plaguing the town of Stillwater. Over recent months, the serpent people have abducted townspeople, prospectors, Chiricahua Apache, and wandering travelers for use in their experiments. Some of these unfortunates are still imprisoned in the complex.

The investigators will have their hands full exploring Knife Cut Mesa, dealing with walking dead, Taza and the Chiricahua, and the furtive trognophides. If they make it into the serpent people’s lair, the investigators can find information concerning the enemy’s plans, as well as weapons to fight them—if they can figure out how to use them. Freeing the captives might gain them allies in their fight against the serpent people, both here and in the concluding chapter of the campaign. Failure could find the would-be rescuers captured, imprisoned, and used as new test subjects by their scaly captors.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The course of events in this chapter is very much player-led. The Keeper should be familiar with the various factions and locations, and tailor encounters and events to the investigators’ actions.

The investigators should have been pointed toward Knife Cut Mesa, the source of the “fireworks,” during **Chapter 1**. Rumors of the Chiricahua Apache might also send the party onto the mesa to seek these renegades, perhaps in search of missing townsfolk believed abducted by Taza and his men. The investigators’ exploration of the mesa leads them into the lair of the trognophides in Deep Canyon, where other discoveries can be made. These “Watchers on the Mesa” keep an eye on the investigators and may attack if the heroes get too close to the secrets of the serpent people.

The Chiricahua Apache also stalk the mesa and they may also confront the investigators. Such meetings may or may not be peaceable, and while the Apache are belligerent, tactful investigators can bargain with them. The Chiricahua have no love for the “little snakes,” and this enmity might be the basis for an uneasy alliance.

The early stages of this scenario probably involve one or more trips to the mesa, with the investigators trying to find signs of their quarry while they, in turn, are stalked by the trognophides, the walking dead, and the Chiricahua. Over the course of the campaign, the investigators may make several trips to the mesa to explore its features; however, the dangers encountered there are likely to force them to camp elsewhere, either back in Stillwater or on one of the nearby ranches north of town.

The main focus of this chapter is the discovery of the serpent people's lair in the mountains west of Knife Cut Mesa. The investigators might find the lair by successfully tracking the serpents there, or they could be captured by the Watchers on the Mesa and taken to the lair for experimentation. Should all the investigators be captured, the Keeper should consider arranging a rescue attempt by Marshal Whitman and the concerned citizens of Stillwater or Taza's Chiricahua Apache, if friendly relations have been established.

This scenario ends with the assumption that the investigators discover and deal with the serpent people's lair hidden in Knife Cut Mesa. **Chapter 3: Shattered Earth, Poisoned Sky** follows these events and leads the investigators to Santa Rosita and the secrets of Shadow Mountain.

KNIFE CUT MESA

The mesa top is a flat scrubland, with low grass and vegetation to the north and southeast, sand and rocks in the center, and scrubby forest to the southwest where the mountains rise up. Cutting through the northwestern desert portion of the mesa is Deep Canyon. The rim of the mesa is anywhere from 50–150 feet (15–46 m) above the pass and prairie below; the edges are mostly cliffs or very steep hillsides. There are a handful of easily navigable trails up to the top.

The Hidden Trail

If the investigators come up from the south and travel along this trail, allow a Hard **Track** roll from anyone specifically stating they are looking for side trails; if successful, they detect broken weeds and flattened grass, indicating someone has crossed toward the west. If following this hidden trail, a further successful **Track** is needed to follow the barely discernible

path through the heavy brush and scraggy trees toward the cliffs in the mountains where the serpent people have their lair (**The Vipers' Nest**, page 45). Note that following this trail may rouse the trognophides, who keep a lookout for intruders (**Watchers on the Mesa**, page 42).

Searching for the Fireworks

The investigators are likely to want to search the area where the “fireworks” appeared to have their origin—on the southern rim of the mesa, the portion facing Stillwater. If they use the southern approach to the mesa, the investigators can spot a trail leading through the brambles and cacti toward the north; anyone from Stillwater knows this trail leads past Deep Canyon and around the edge of the mountains farther north.

A successful **Navigate** roll pinpoints the location of where the “fireworks” were set off, on the mesa's southern rim. Once on the mesa, a successful Hard **Track** roll detects a path from the launch site to the main trail; an Extreme success with this roll suggests that there were multiple travelers here, all apparently barefoot.

When at the launch site, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll discovers indentations on the ground and grass where items were placed: square-shaped equipment (boxes?) and marks suggesting poles or legs. The grass and scrub are flattened out in a wide radius, suggesting there might have been a dozen or more people here.

There is nothing else to be found here, although a successful **Track** roll picks up a path leading back to the main north-south trail. If followed, it appears that several people headed north on the main trail, and if a Hard success is achieved for this roll, the tracker realizes the travelers tried to conceal their tracks by dragging brush to wipe out the marks of passage. The tracks lead to the mouth of Deep Canyon, where another successful **Track** roll confirms that the travelers went into the declivity.

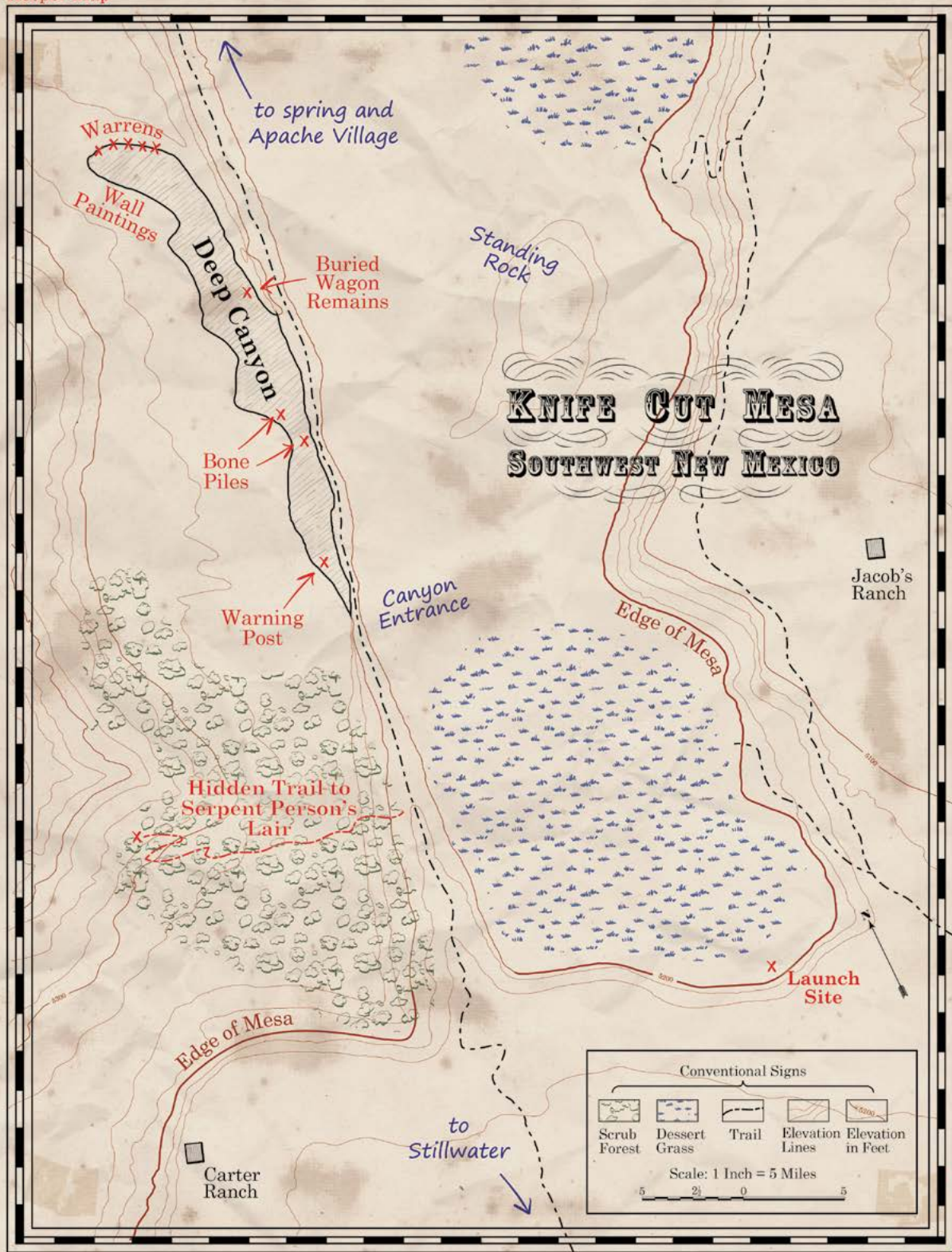
Exploring the Mesa

As the investigators explore the mesa, they come across signs of other inhabitants. At different times and in different locations on the mesa, as determined by the Keeper, successful **Spot Hidden** or **Track** rolls could discover the footprints of three different groups:

- The shambling footprints of one or more of the walking dead (see **Other Problems**, page 40).
- The prints made by a party of people wearing moccasins (**The Chiricahua Apache**, page 43).
- Signs of small, bare feet and the slithering tracks of one or more large snakes (**Watchers on the Mesa**, page 42).

TROUBLE ON KNIFE CUT MESA

Keeper Map



Keeper Map

Knife Cut Mesa map

For the most part, these random, easily lost trails should serve only as hints of the mesa's inhabitants; however, the Keeper may wish to have investigators following such tracks come face to face with the entity or entities that left the trails in the first place. A successful **Natural World** roll notes that the mesa is devoid of larger animal life—no rabbits, foxes, or mountain lions, although scorpions, spiders, insects, lizards, birds, and snakes are plentiful.

Standing Rock

Near the center of the mesa, in the rocky desert portion, is a tall, craggy rock formation called Standing Rock, which juts, finger-like, some 40 feet (12 m) into the air. A successful **Climb** roll is needed to reach the small, flat peak of the stone finger; a pushed failure may result in a fall, causing 1D6 damage or the investigator concerned is spotted by one of the three groups on the mesa (the walking dead, Chiricahua Apache, or the Watchers). Once atop Standing Rock, an investigator can see for miles—if the Keeper wishes, moving figures may be spied (Apache, undead, or serpent folk); however, a cruel Keeper may call for a **Luck** roll to determine whether an earthquake occurs, requiring any investigator at the top to succeed with a **DEX** roll or fall off Standing Rock and receive 4D6 damage (a **Jump** roll may half the damage).

OTHER PROBLEMS

The area around Stillwater—including Knife Cut Mesa—is still experiencing the undead plague (triggered by the serpent people's virus). On the mesa, these walking corpses are likely to be older, ragged skeletal things rather than the fresher walking dead found closer to Stillwater. These undead might rise up from the grass or spring from behind a cluster of rocks to attack the investigators. Alternatively, the investigators may sight a distant traveler and approach, only to find a skeletal thing hungering for flesh. Such encounters should, primarily, focus on a solitary zombie, but at the Keeper's discretion it could be a group seeking food. Remember, there are only around 15 to 20 walking dead in the area outside Stillwater; mostly long-dead travelers, prospectors, and Apache—use the profiles of the undead in **Chapter 1**, page 34.

In addition to the undead, the serpent people in the distant Shadow Mountain complex are triggering earthquakes in their attempt to create a volcano. While these earthquakes are mild, they may still affect the investigators as they explore the mesa. This can be as simple as shaking the earth as they cross the flat scrubland or travel up the passes to the mesa top, raising dust in the desert, or causing dangerous rock falls as they explore Deep Canyon.



Standing Rock

DEEP CANYON

A well-worn trail—used by white travelers, Chiricahua Apache, and serpent folk alike—crosses Knife Cut Mesa from north to south and skirts the edge of the canyon that inspired the place's name. The box canyon slices into the earth from the south, where a narrow pass leads down to the gloomy, rock-strewn floor. The walls are some 50 feet (15 m) high at the bottom of the pass.

A Grim Warning

On entering the canyon, the investigators are greeted by a sun-bleached human skull, its lower jaw missing, which has been jammed onto a wooden post in the ground. A few hundred yards ahead, more bleached bones are scattered across the canyon floor. A successful **Medicine**, **Natural World**, or **Science (Biology or Zoology)** roll notes the bones come from a variety of animals: humans, cattle, horses, mountain lions, and other, unidentifiable remains. Horses absolutely refuse to travel beyond this first bone pile, and may rear, bolt, and flee if anyone forces them to try.

Mound of Bones

Around a bend in the canyon there is an even larger mound of bones, over 3 feet (1 m) high and 15 feet (4.5 m) long.

Some of the bones have been broken, and all have been gnawed. The sheer number of bones and their tooth-scarred state provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss). Anyone disturbing the bone pile discovers it is crawling with snakes, which slither out around the investigators' feet. The snakes are harmless and quickly return to the bone-pile or slither away.

As the investigators explore the canyon, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll finds small and unshod footprints, human-like but quite narrow and clawed. A **Cthulhu Mythos** roll may identify these as the tracks of degenerate serpent people, the trognophides.

The Shiny Debris

Farther into the canyon, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices something shiny near one wall. Partially buried in the sand are bits of broken glass and charred wood and metal. Digging into the ground unearths more burned debris, in a radius of 10 feet (3 m). If necessary, a successful **INT** or **Know** roll identifies the hub and spokes of a wagon wheel, metal fittings from a wagon, and bits of metal, glass, and crystal reminiscent of the wind chimes seen throughout Stillwater.

Keeper note: the debris is the remains of the traveling salesman's wagon, which the serpent people used to



distribute the surveillance devices throughout Stillwater several months ago. Note that poking about in the wagon's remains may draw the attention of the trognophides (see **Watchers on the Mesa**, nearby).

The Cave

The canyon's walls narrow toward the north until they almost touch overhead. In the darkened northern end, the canyon becomes a cave, whose southwestern wall features a series of extremely crude patterns and shapes daubed in dark brown pigment: spiral designs, squiggly lines, eyes, sunbursts, stars, animals (deer, birds, and so on), and human stick figures (some with tails). None of the paintings are more than 3 feet (1 m) above the ground, probably indicating a very diminutive artist. A successful **Anthropology** roll or knowledge of southwestern American Indian culture realizes this is the work of no known tribe.

The stench of reptiles is strong here. At the base of the cave's northern wall are several burrows that disappear into the ground. Most are roughly 12–18 inches (30–46 cm) across, and deep and dark—if desired, the Keeper may elect to have one or two larger burrows that allow humans of SIZ 50 or less to enter. Despite the certain danger of encountering more trognophides in such burrows, if a successful **Navigate** roll is made, the tunnels eventually

connect to the mountain lair of the serpent people (see **The Lair: Level Four**, page 48). Anyone foolish enough to poke a hand or stick into one of the burrows stirs up 1D3 of the most bestial trognophides—use #11 from the table for these bestial things, who are indistinguishable from large snakes (see **Trognophides** profiles on page 60). If any of these creatures are killed, others of their kind may come to their aid, at the Keeper's discretion. On the other hand, even if the investigators don't disturb the burrows, one or more of the creatures may secretly slither out and follow, perhaps as far as the investigators' camp, or even into Stillwater.

WATCHERS ON THE MESA

The trognophides keep an eye on anyone venturing onto Knife Cut Mesa. One or two of the more humanoid-looking creatures may lurk in the grasses and scrub forest, or among the rocks, while their more debased serpentine cousins slither about in the open, as they are indistinguishable from normal snakes.

These creatures warn their kin if strangers intrude into Deep Canyon or follow the hidden trail west toward the serpent people's facility in the mountains. The trognophides are more likely to follow and watch, but may attack if their numbers



exceed those of the investigators, and especially if the serpent people's lair is approached. If outnumbered, the creatures use thrown rocks or other missile weapons to draw away or drive off intruders. If able to rouse the serpent people, **Serpent Person #5** (page 59) could join the trognophides to assault the investigators, using magic to send an eagle to attack foes or casting Evil Eye. The humanoid-like trognophides can attack with weapons to cause a distraction, allowing their slithering snake-like cousins to sneak up and deliver poisonous bites. Other tactics could include performing a delaying action to enable one or more (full-blooded) serpent people to arrive to help out with their technological weapons. Remember, attacks such as these are primarily used to defend the serpent people's lair in the mountains.

In the canyon, the trognophides may attack by dropping or throwing rocks down from the canyon walls above. Such attacks aim to keep intruders from poking into the burned wagon remains, to defend the serpent burrows, or to avenge others of their kind slain there. The Keeper should stage these assaults as mysteriously as possible, with rocks flying from nowhere, a sudden attack by a crazed golden eagle, or furtive figures flitting through the brush who dart forth to stab or claw.

The trognophides try to remove the slain bodies of their kin if possible, but, if any are left behind, they are found to be child-sized creatures with mottled and scaly skin, and flattened snake-like heads containing fanged mouths and slitted eyes. All have clawed hands, while only a few have tails. Some are clothed in rags or animal skins, and all are wizened like ancient little men. They carry the reek of reptiles, and their weapons are extremely primitive. The most devolved of the creatures are nearly indistinguishable from large snakes, though a **Natural World** or **Science (Biology or Zoology)** roll recognizes that they belong to no known species.

Another possibility arises if **Hiram Colby** (Chapter 1, page 33) escaped the investigators in Stillwater. The serpent man spy may join the trognophides lurking on the mesa, perhaps using disguise serum (page 11) to take the form of one of the Chiricahua Apache captured by the serpent people—in this case, he may allow himself to be seen (at a discreet distance) leading the trognophides, hoping to raise the investigators' suspicions about an alliance between the serpents and the Chiricahuas. Alternatively, Colby, still masquerading as an Apache, may lead the trognophides to raid ranches close to Knife Cut Mesa. Such raids are designed to make the investigators and townsfolk believe the Chiricahua are in cahoots with the serpent people. If Colby was killed, **Serpent Person #3** (page 58) may, instead, carry out such ruses, using disguise serum to masquerade as **Prisoner #1** (page 57)—a middle-aged Apache held captive by the serpent people in their lair.

Keeper note: encounters with the trognophides could prove to be quite lethal for the investigators; if in doubt, and to prevent the investigators from being wiped out, the Keeper can focus the efforts of the trognophides on capturing the investigators (use the **Knock-Out Blow** rules, page 125, *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*), with the creatures dragging fallen foes to the serpent people's lair for use as experimental subjects. Should any investigators remain free, they can mount a rescue while their captive colleagues are being transported to the lair in the mountains, or follow the serpents to the facility in the hope of saving their friends by sneaking in to enact their liberation.

THE CHIRICAHUA APACHE

The Chiricahua Apache band, led by Taza, has a village to the north of Knife Cut Mesa. While Taza's braves have tangled with the "little snakes" before, they frequently attend to more mundane matters, such as wandering south to attack their enemies or raiding the cattle ranches around Stillwater. On the mesa and around Stillwater, encounters with the Apache are likely to feature 1D6+2 hunters (on foot). If expecting trouble, or if hunting, there may be as many as 3D6 (mounted)—nearly the entire male population of Taza's band. The Apache prefer to use stealth and stay in hiding, only attacking if they have superior numbers and their targets are lightly armed.

Taza's band lives in the lower hills and mountains several miles north of Stillwater. In total, the group comprises 15–20 adult males, 15 adult women, and 10–12 children aged 12 or younger, all living in wickiups. Theirs is a harsh life spent seeking food and water from the desert. Clothes are made of cotton, linen, and deer- and cowhides, along with leather moccasins or boots. Most of their guns were taken from their victims, consisting of rifles and a few revolvers—all with limited ammunition. As a general rule, most of the warriors use bows. The serpent people's virus has had little effect on Taza's band since they live beyond the area of contamination.

The Apache are resentful of white intruders; however, they can be reasoned with if the speaker knows the Chiricahua dialect or another Apache tongue. Otherwise, at the Keeper's discretion, a Hard or (possibly) Extreme success in a social skill is required to establish a meaningful conversation based on snippets of English and Apache tongue combined with gestures. If coming upon the investigators, Taza's band may demand horses, guns, or ammunition in exchange for safe passage on the mesa. If refused, they may instigate an attack if they outnumber the intruders; otherwise, they ride off, perhaps to shadow their prey and find an opportunity to ambush them.

Taza, a.k.a. “Cruzado,” leader of the Chiricahua Apache

The Chiricahua Apache are led by a man named Taza, called Cruzado (“Crosswise”) by the whites due to the cross-shaped scar he bears on his left cheek. Taza dislikes whites, but hates the “little snakes” even more; therefore, he has no qualms about making and breaking deals with the whites. In all considerations, Taza’s people come first, and while he may agree to cooperate with the investigators, he will do all he can to avoid harm coming to his village. On Knife Cut Mesa, there is a 35% chance that Taza leads any group of hunters encountered; in which case, he does the talking for his men.

- **Description:** a tall, powerfully built man with a scar on his left cheek.
- **Traits:** dislikes whites, hates the “little snakes.”
- **Roleplaying hooks:** while he is unlikely to ever fully trust the investigators, he may make a deal to work with them to eradicate the “little snakes.” If his people are freed from the serpent people’s captivity, he swears brotherhood with their rescuers.

Taza’s profile can be found on page 55.



Taza

Talking to the Chiricahua Apache

If accused of abducting people from Stillwater, the Chiricahua claim that the “little snakes” are to blame. If asked about the “little snakes,” the braves demand guns or ammunition for the information; if appeased, they say the little snakes are an evil race of small men living in the mountains to the west, who can also sometimes be found in the gloomy canyon (Deep Canyon). They look and bite like snakes but use crude weapons and eat almost anything. The little snakes have taken many men and women captives over the years, probably for food. It’s clear the braves hate the scaly horrors—enlightened investigators may pick up on this and attempt to gain the braves’ allegiance to hunt for the little snakes’ lair in exchange for horses, weapons, or cattle.

If informed that a Apache has been seen with the little snakes—actually a serpent man spy masquerading as an Apache—the braves angrily dispute the claim, stating that none of their kind would dare stoop to such foul company.

If a basis of trust is formed, the braves say the little snakes even have their own sun, hidden in the heart of a mountaintop. There is an old legend that one of their braves saw the sun shining from the top of a mountain and, when he climbed up to see it, he was struck blind by its light. The braves can lead the investigators to a mountain near to their village from which the little snakes’ mountaintop sun can be seen shining—this is the giant power crystal above Level One of **The Vipers’ Nest** (page 45). A successful **Science (Geology)** roll suspects the “sun” could be some sort of massive crystal deposit, perhaps indicating a gold or silver lode.

Keeper note: an investigator who is shown the “sun” atop the mountain by the Apache can attempt a **Navigate** roll to identify the mountain and lead their compatriots to it, leading to the discovery of **The Vipers’ Nest**.

Roleplaying the Chiricahua Apache

Harsh experience has taught the Apache to be devious and ruthless, and they will break any deals or truces with whites if they spot a weakness in their “allies.” If the investigators come to the aid of Taza’s people—perhaps when the trognophides are attacking them—or free any captives held by the serpent people, the Apache treat them with greater respect thereafter.

Taza and his people can be introduced in a number of ways: stealing cattle from one of the nearby ranches, shadowing the investigators as they travel on Knife Cut Mesa, bursting from the grass or scrub during an ambush, riding forth brazenly to demand goods in exchange for safe passage, or caught in a battle with the “little snakes.” Alternatively, they could form an angry mob searching for a recently abducted

member of their group, or the investigators might find a wounded brave crawling away from a skirmish with the trognophides. Unfortunately, the investigators' first impulse may be to attack on sight if they have seen and been fooled by the serpent person masquerading as an Apache; thus playing right into the devious ophidians' plans. The Apache can be used to oppose, confuse, or aid the investigators in their quest to uncover the cause of the troubles in Stillwater.

THE VIPERS' NEST

The lair of the serpent people is within a mountain that rises up from the western edge of Knife Cut Mesa. A successful **Track** roll allows the investigators to find and follow the trail of the trognophides onto a ledge that winds several hundred yards/meters up the side of the mountain. Even then, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll is needed to discover the entry into the complex, as the serpent people have camouflaged the metal entrance with earth and brush.

This series of chambers is millennia old. It is an ancient stronghold for those serpent people who went into hibernation and slept until just a few years ago. The passages and chambers are carved from stone and earth and have

almost no sharp angles or straight edges of any kind. Instead, the oval-shaped passages curve gracefully as they connect the chambers, and the chambers themselves are flattened circles, ovals, or lozenges. The passageways are about 6 feet (2 m) high and 5 feet (1.5 m) wide, while most chambers are roughly 8 feet (2.4 m) high. The entire complex is very warm, thanks to artificial heating elements built into the walls and floors, powered by the giant crystal far above. Though the main entry level is near the middle, the complex is described from top to bottom.

THE SERPENT PEOPLE

The serpent folk in this laboratory complex are all approximately 5 feet (1.5 m) tall and sleek, with grayish-brown scales. They wear white or tan sleeveless, knee-length tunics that have a slit in the lower back to accommodate their tails; the tunics have many small pockets for carrying tools, weapons, and other items. While none of them wear shoes, some wear silver jewelry, such as rings or necklaces.

Each serpent person has an area of expertise, whether it's genetic science or the creation of technological devices. Hiram Colby, the spy in Stillwater, came from this facility. These creatures are working with their brethren in the



The Chiricahua Apache

Shadow Mountain facility (see **Chapter 3: Shattered Earth, Poisoned Sky**). The two groups of serpent people are in regular contact with one another via communication crystals.

The serpent people in this facility are seeking to perfect the virus they created that alters the intelligence of humans. The results, so far, have largely been successful, though it seems multiple applications might be required to permanently affect the human targets. In addition, experiments on the trognophides have shown promise, but there is still a long way to go before the “little snakes” can be raised back up the evolutionary ladder. Still, once the humans are reduced to gibbering slaves, there will be plenty of time to restore the lost empire of the serpent people.

The serpent people featured are primarily scientists: cold, calculating creatures fanatically devoted to their long-term plans. For this reason, they do not kill intruders outright, instead opting to capture them for use in their experiments. Portray the serpent people as coldly efficient, performing experiments, autopsies, and even trepanations on living and dead investigators and their allies. The creatures speak English and Apache dialects, and if the investigators can somehow impress them the serpent people may, with casual arrogance, discuss some of their plans with the upstart “apes”—since they won’t be leaving the complex alive or sane. There can be no reasoning with the serpent folk, however, as they are committed to bringing down humanity.

- **Serpent Person #1:** a geneticist and the chief of this facility; he wears a white tunic and carries a beam weapon crystal and two paralysis grenades, as well as the magnetic crystal key to the cells in the prison on Level Six of the complex.
- **Serpent Person #2:** a technician, she wears a white robe and carries a beam weapon crystal.
- **Serpent Person #3:** a warrior, he wears a tan robe and carries a beam weapon crystal and three paralysis grenades. This creature sometimes travels to Knife Cut Mesa, Stillwater, and Santa Rosita (**Chapter 3**, page 68) to spy on the humans; thus, he is familiar with human firearms.
- **Serpent Person #4:** a warrior-technician, she wears a tan robe, but ordinarily carries no weapons.
- **Serpent Person #5:** an “improved” trognophide, its intelligence and physical stature slightly increased through extensive genetic manipulation. Outwardly, it closely resembles its atavistic kin, though its snout is blunter, its fangs jut outside of its jaws, and its claws are larger and clumsier. The creature is mute. It wears a brown tunic and carries no weapons, using its mallet-like fists and poisonous bite in combat. Serpent Person #5 follows the commands of its masters, even unto death.

Pulp: double the number of trognophides in and around the lair.

The Lair: Level One

The Crystal

The topmost level of the complex is near the summit of the mountain. Here, an enormous artificial crystal sits within a huge cavity, open to the sky. The crystal is within a deep recess surrounded by crags, so it (normally) can only be seen from above (see **Talking to the Chiricahua Apache**, page 44). The crystal catches the sun’s rays, and the resulting heat is converted into steam and electrical energy used to power the complex. The crystal is white-hot during daylight hours but cools at night.

Intrepid souls climbing the mountain during the day and entering the lair from above encounter the crystal. On reaching the crater at the summit, the intense heat is apparent. If the heat does not put them off, the investigators can start to make their way into the crater but find the heat from the crystal is blistering, causing 1D6 damage. If they continue, the heat rises as they approach the crystal, with heat damage increasing by +1D6 per 5 feet (1.5 m), cumulative; thus, entering 15 feet (4.5 m) into the cavity causes 3D6 heat damage—much closer than this and flesh incinerates. Sensible investigators, who sense the heat, wait till darkness, allowing time for the crystal to cool down, making access far easier.



Serpent person #1

TROUBLE ON KNIFE CUT MESA

In daytime, anyone looking into the blazing crystal must make a **POW** roll to avoid being struck permanently blind—a kind Keeper might allow a **Luck** to reduce this to temporary blindness for 1D10+1 hours. By night, the crystal is harmless, and investigators climbing down into the crater can discover the two access tunnels and ladders leading to the control room directly below the crystal.

Keeper note: the crystal has 25 points of armor and 150 hit points, making it immune to most attacks. Should the crystal be somehow destroyed, the entire complex is endangered, as the energies stored elsewhere in the system build up and expand, shaking the entire mountain to its core, possibly destroying the serpent people's facility and killing all within.

Control Room

Below the power crystal is the control room, where the energy siphoned from the crystal is monitored, processed, and distributed to various parts of the complex. During the day this room swelters with temperatures well over 110 °F (43 °C) due to the sun-thirsting crystal above it. Thick, silver-colored metal tubes run from the ceiling down the walls into the floor, conveying power to the other chambers. The domed ceiling is over 50 feet (15 m) high. Ladders on either side of the room ascend to apertures in the dome used to access the crystal from below. There is a 50% chance that Serpent Person #2 (page 58) is here.

The main control panel is on a raised section in the center of the room, a waist-high console studded with crystal-like buttons and levers of various geometric shapes. There's also a strangely constructed chair—uncomfortable for humans, but just right for a tailed biped. Investigators succeeding with a Hard **Science (Engineering)** or Extreme **INT** roll can decipher the controls in a limited fashion, allowing them to trigger a serious malfunction in the system, which might entail anything from raising or lowering the temperature in the complex to causing a power outage, or even shaking the whole mountain down on itself. The scope of such meddling is left to the Keeper to determine and should, in part, be consistent with the intention of the investigator concerned—bringing the mountain down, while something of a showstopper, probably also means the death of everyone involved and the end of the campaign.

Two passages exit the control room: one descends in a steep spiral down to the technician's lab in Level Two, while the other passage climbs in a gentle curve up to a small cup-shaped observation deck on the southern face of the mountain.

Observatory

This area is covered with the same camouflage mesh used to conceal the main entrance to the complex below, and cannot

be detected from outside by curious human eyes. There is a telescope attached to one of the strange seats. Looking through the eyepiece (without adjusting the setting) allows the viewer to see into the town of Stillwater many miles below. Apart from the telescope-chair, the only other item of interest here is a small stone box containing a pair of long-range communication crystals (page 11)—used by the serpent people to speak with their brethren in the Shadow Mountain complex near Santa Rosita (see **Chapter 3**).

The Lair: Level Two

This level consists of three chambers: a technology laboratory, a small armory, and a surveillance chamber. There is a 50% chance that Serpent Person #2 will be found on this level and a 35% chance that Serpent Person #4 is also here somewhere (see page 59).

Technology Laboratory

Here, the serpent people create, repair, and refine their crystal devices and weapons. This lozenge-shaped chamber has a large workbench at its center, with other, smaller benches off to the sides. The walls are lined with shelves. Dozens of crystals, wire filaments, bits of metal, and weird-looking tools (used for cutting, soldering, etching, and so forth) are scattered about, as well as several of the oddly shaped chairs. A passage spirals steeply up to the control room and power source above, while another curves down to the general quarters in Level Three. Two doorways lead to the armory and the surveillance chamber, respectively.

If inspecting the items in the room, the investigators discover several palm-sized metal triangles, each etched with glyphs and strange diagrams. A successful Hard **Science (Engineering)** or Extreme **INT** roll suspects that these may be plans or blueprints of some kind, perhaps “written” (or, rather, etched) in Naacal, the serpent people's language; however, deciphering these plans is beyond the ability of the investigators at this time (see **Level 3: The Library**).

Armory

This small chamber, with many shelves and racks on all of the walls, serves as both an armory and storage room. Stored here are the following (see **Chapter 1, Technological Devices of the Serpent People**, page 10):

- Armor crystals (10)
- Beam weapon crystals (12)
- Communication crystals (10)
- Explosive grenades (8)
- Paralysis grenades (20).
- Scrying crystals (“camera” type) (30)

One shelf holds a wooden crate containing 12 large rockets—these being the same as the ones used to disperse the virus over Stillwater. At present, the rockets are basically the same as elaborate and somewhat larger versions of modern-day “bottle-rocket” fireworks.

Surveillance Chamber

Connected via a doorway to the technology laboratory, this low-ceilinged and oval-shaped room contains a waist-high pedestal and a single shelf, on which sit a number of strangely shaped crystals. The pedestal has several small indentations in its top. A very long passageway curves out of this room, sloping downwards to the main entryway on Level Four.

If aware of the devices used by the serpent people, an investigator making a successful **INT** roll notes that the indentations on the pedestal mirror those of a scrying crystal. Should a “sending” crystal be placed in one of the indentations, tapping its different facets allows the user to scan through the various images from “camera” crystals connected to the device. The resultant ghostly images are projected onto the walls of the chamber, flickering like a cinema show, and provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss). The investigators should recognize several familiar people and locations in Stillwater among the images shown.

The Lair: Level Three

The serpent people’s living quarters are on Level Three, along with a food larder and a library.

Living Quarters

Two chambers comprise the living area, a general “living room” and a sleeping area. The living room is the larger of the two chambers and contains two raised beds of earth (see following), several of the chairs used by serpent people, and shelves and desks on which there are more of the triangular metal plates (see **Level 3: The Library**). Passages in the north and south of the living area lead up to Level Two and down to Level Four respectively, while to the west, a short passage leads to the sleeping area, and another to the east takes the investigators to the serpent people’s food larder.

The sleeping chamber is oval in shape. On the stone floor are four circular raised beds of earth, each some 6 feet (2 m) across, covered with sand, straw, and plant matter—used by the serpent people to sleep upon. In addition to the passageway linking this room with the living area, a second passage curves south and leads to Level Four, and a third passage connects to the library.

Serpent Person #3 is found in the living quarters 75% of the time, while Serpent Person #5 is here 35% of the time (see page 59). There is also a 35% chance that 1D4 trognophides (humanoid in stature) may be found here, attending to their masters.

The Larder

A small circular room, its walls are lined with shelves holding a variety of wire cages. The cages contain live rats, mice, rabbits, and other small mammals or birds. Hanging from hooks in the center of the ceiling are cured hunks and strips of meat. A successful **Medicine** or **Science (Biology or Zoology)** roll ensures the investigators realize that some the larger pieces of hanging meat derive from human beings and provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss).

The Library

This chamber is a long, narrow oval, its walls lined with shelves from floor to an 8 foot (2.4 m) high ceiling. The shelves are filled with thousands of triangular metal plates etched with the glyphs of serpent people writing (see **Level 2: Technology Laboratory**). The plates here consist of “books” on a variety of subjects ranging from history, biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, the Cthulhu Mythos, and so forth. There are upwards of 30,000 “volumes” in this library. An exit in the southern portion of the room leads down to the entry chamber on Level Four.

Keeper note: an investigator spending approximately 12 months studying the triangular plates may begin to develop an understanding of the language of the serpent people. Such study and interpretation requires a successful Extreme **INT** roll to gain 1D3 percentile points in Language (Naacal). Successive study might, at the Keeper’s discretion, add +1D2 percentiles per month to a maximum of INT divided by two—there is only so much a human can comprehend of such an alien language. Further advances may be possible through successfully reading books written in the serpent people’s tongue—i.e. skill checks made during investigator development phases—each time to a maximum of +1 percent (rather than +1D10).

The Lair: Level Four

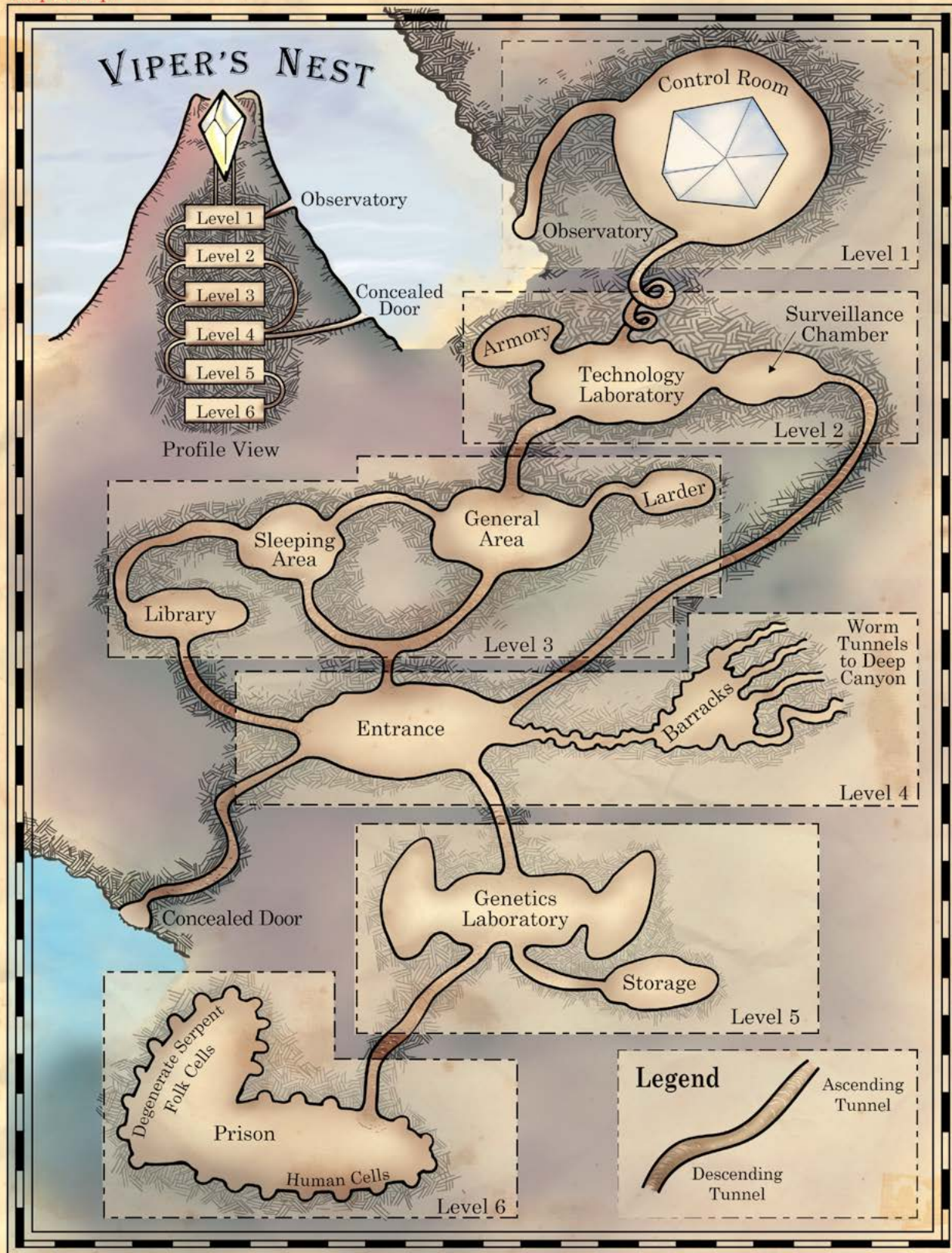
Level Four is the facility’s main entrance. The concealed door in the mountainside leads to a hallway with six exits: two passages lead up to Level Three, another leads directly up to Level Two, one goes down to Level Five, one connects to the concealed entrance, and another leads to the barracks. At most times, 1D4+2 trognophides occupy the hallway.

The Barracks

The smooth-walled passageway from the hallway leads into a rough-hewn chamber that stinks of reptiles. At any given time, 1D10+10 trognophides (of all shapes and sizes) loiter around here and savagely attack any non-serpent people on sight—some aiming to subdue intruders while others go to fetch their serpent people masters. If more than 8 of the

TRouble ON KNIFE CUT MESA

Keeper Map



Map Representative Only - Not to Scale

Keeper Map

Viper's Nest map

"little snakes" are slain, the remainder flee using a network of burrows that penetrate into the mountain—the majority of these cramped tunnels are too small to accommodate humans, although the Keeper may elect to have one or more just large enough to allow investigators of SIZ 50 and below to use them as a means of escape or entry, as some tunnels eventually connect with the burrows in Deep Canyon (**The Cave**, page 42). Those venturing into these claustrophobic burrows are sure to meet more trognophides who are far more familiar with the network of tunnels and, consequently, able to launch ambushes and surprise attacks on humans traveling through them.

The Lair: Level Five

This level holds two chambers: a genetics laboratory and a storage area. Passageways connect to Level Four and Level Six. Serpent Person #1 is present in the genetics laboratory 75% of the time, while Serpent Person #5 is here 35% of the time.

Genetics Laboratory

The serpent people conduct experiments on human captives, as well as their own degenerate kin, searching for ways to lower the intelligence of the former while attempting to raise the latter from their bestial state. There are shelves and benches jutting out from the walls of this curiously barbell-shaped chamber, each equipped with one of the strange chairs found throughout the complex. Two of the benches are fitted with leather restraints adequate for human-shaped test subjects.

Throughout the lab are crystal vials containing different colored liquids, metal shavings, herbs, and compounds of all hues and consistencies. Weirdly shaped crystals, curious metal tools, heating components, mixing bowls, and all manner of chemical and alchemical paraphernalia can be found here.

Scattered on the lab benches are more of the etched triangular metal "books" of the serpent people (see **Level 2: Technology Laboratory**); these specifically relate to genetics, biology, chemistry, and disease.



Keeper note: an investigator making a successful **Science (Chemistry, Pharmacy, Biology, and so on)** roll may be able to identify some (but not all) of the compounds and liquids in this chamber, allowing them to fashion a poison or explosive device, at the Keeper's discretion (use or modify the mechanics of the explosive or paralysis grenades found in **Chapter 1, Technological Devices of the Serpent People**, page 10). Note, however, that investigators without scientific training or understanding are more liable to accidentally produce or unleash a noxious gas or virus, even by just opening the wrong vial. Call for a **Luck** roll to avoid the consequences of meddling: if failed, the Keeper should determine what happens (perhaps a poisonous gas requiring a successful Hard **CON** roll to avoid falling unconscious for 1D6+2 rounds). Unconscious investigators are likely to be captured and taken to Level Six.

Storage Area

The temperature here is noticeably cooler than elsewhere in the complex. The chamber contains two rows of shelving, each with racks holding small crystal vials, which in turn contain different colored substances: red-brown, purple, and colorless. Triangular-shaped metal plates, each bearing different glyphs, appear to act as signage; however, deciphering these is beyond the abilities of the investigators (unless they can read Naacal). The three substances in the different vials are:

- **Red-Brown:** disguise serum (20 doses; various human forms).
- **Purple:** stupefying virus (50 doses).
- **Colorless:** domination serum (20 doses).

On the chamber's floor are three large wooden crates containing the weapons and gear taken from the captives held in the cells on Level Six. In total, there are seven bows and quivers of arrows, two rifles, a shotgun, six revolvers, eight knives, and a smattering of ammunition for each weapon (1D6×1D6 rounds), along with various gun belts, hats, items of clothing, and other personal effects (watches, jewelry, tobacco, whiskey bottles/flasks, and so on). In addition, there is a total of 3D100 dollars worth of paper, coin, gold nuggets, and bags of silver dust. If any investigators have previously been captured, their gear is also here.

The Lair: Level Six

The lowest level of the complex consists of two conjoined oval-shaped chambers whose walls are studded with small cells, each fitted with metal-barred doorways. The larger of the two oval prisons holds human prisoners, captured for use as experimental test subjects. The cells are circular, with beds of straw and leaves, and a wooden bucket for waste. There are currently seven human prisoners here—see the box nearby for details.

Keeper note: perhaps with sufficient time to recover, those prisoners affected by the virus may regain some or all of their lost wits, but for now they'll have to be led out of the complex if rescued.

The cell doors are locked with a sophisticated magnetic lock, opened by waving a crystal key over the mechanism. The key is carried by Serpent Person #1, who can be found in the Genetics Laboratory on Level Five 75% of the time. Without the crystal key, the bars must be pried apart to effect an escape. The bars have STR 120: refer to **Physical Human Limits**, page 88, *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, if the investigators attempt to use their muscles (using a lever provides a bonus die to the roll). Alternatively, a few hours can be spent chipping the bars out of their stone surroundings, or the careful use of explosives might work.

When the serpent people experiment on the prisoners, they use paralysis grenades to incapacitate the subject then send in four trognophides to carry the victim up to the laboratory on Level Five. They have also used the domination serum to spike the prisoners' water to make them more pliable, though the scientists have learned that this defeats the purpose of monitoring the effects of the virus on the humans' normal behavior.

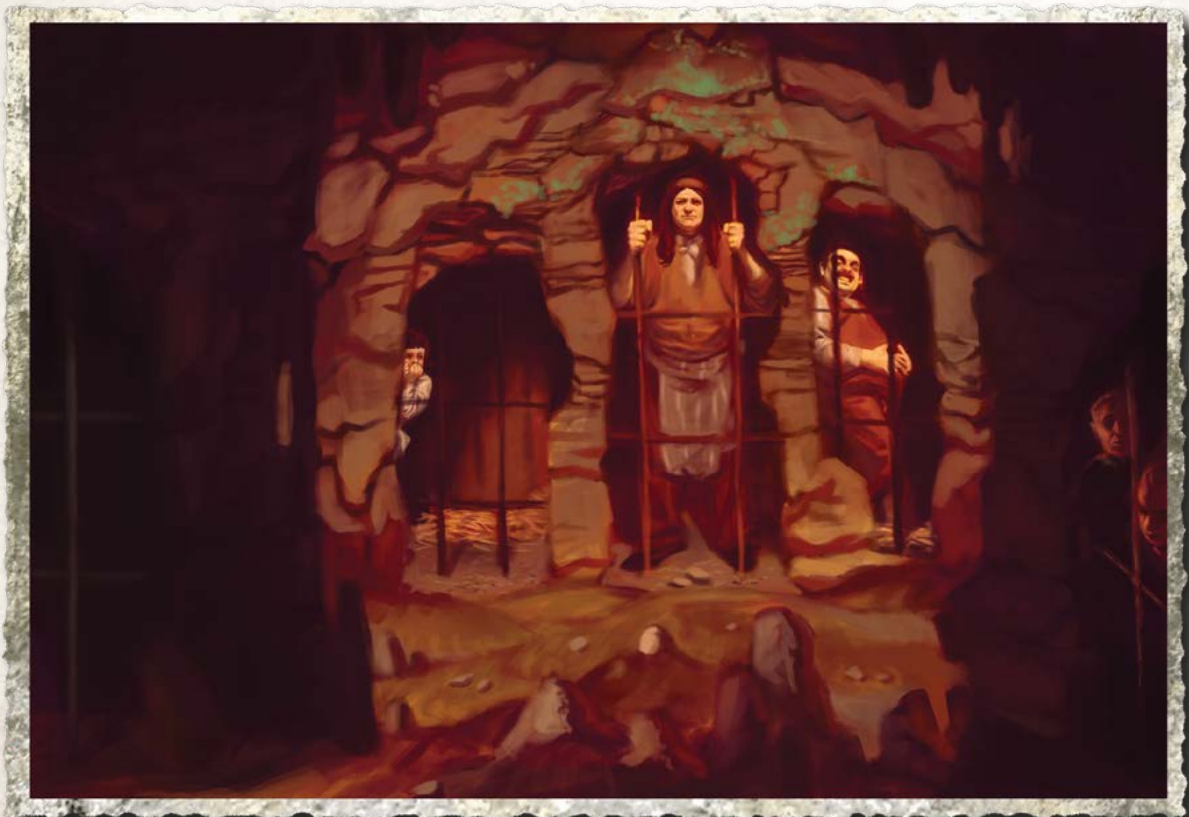
A barred doorway in the west wall leads to the level's other prison, where the serpent people keep a number of trognophides as test subjects. These cells are identical to those in the human section but contain eight degenerate snake folk. So far, the experimental virus has not been as successful in increasing the intelligence of the trognophides as it has been in affecting humans, though Serpent Person #5 is, at least, a little smarter than his brethren. Despite their captivity, if these things are released, they attack any humans present and dutifully obey the commands of the serpent people. As necessary, use profiles #2–#5 of the trognophides on page 60 as these creatures fight only with claws, and only half the captives are actually capable of attacking.

DEFENDING THE COMPLEX

The serpent people react swiftly once they detect intrusion by the investigators. In the main entrance on Level 4, half of any trognophides present attack while the rest attempt to alert the serpent people by scurrying to Level Three to fetch Serpent Person #3 and #5, as well as up to Level Two to find #2 and #4.

The serpent people arm themselves with beam weapon crystals and paralysis grenades, but hang back from any melee, preferring to strike from a distance while the trognophides harry the intruders up close. If the combat goes against them, the serpent people try to retreat to the Armory on Level Two, where they can find more weapons, including explosive grenades. If Serpent Person #1 is on Level Five, he tries to ambush the intruders, possibly sending some trognophides ahead of him (maybe releasing the pitiful reptilian test subjects as well). Where possible, the goal of the serpent people is to capture the investigators (and any allies) using paralysis grenades. Captured invaders are stripped of their weapons and gear—allow a **Sleight of Hand** or a **Stealth** roll if an investigator wishes to try hiding a weapon or item on their person—and tossed into the prison to be used as future test subjects.

If it looks like the complex is in danger of being overrun, or three of the serpent people have been killed or incapacitated, one of the serpent people ascends to the control room on Level One and spends 1D6+1 rounds rigging the power crystal to overload and destroy the whole complex while any remaining serpent people try to flee their base (perhaps via the observation platform on Level One). Once the crystal has been set to overload, the complex grows noticeably hotter by the minute. Five minutes later, the mountain begins to shudder, causing minor cave-ins and perhaps opening the cells in the prison level. For the next five minutes the heat rises, making the walls and floors almost too hot to touch, as more serious earthquakes rock the mountain. Fifteen minutes after the crystal is set to overload, it shatters in its niche in the mountaintop, and, two minutes later, the heat receptors in the walls explode and send molten rock oozing throughout the complex, destroying everyone and everything still inside. Those on the exterior of the mountain should attempt a **DEX** roll to avoid falling from the cliffs or being dashed with spewing lava or flying debris; those who fail their roll suffer 1D6 damage and must then make a **Luck** roll to see if they are also thrown down the mountainside or crushed beneath falling rock, suffering 3D6+6 damage if they fail the roll—a kind Keeper might allow a desperate **Jump** roll to reduce the damage by half.



Prisoners of the serpent people



THE PRISONERS

The human prisoners of the serpent people are a pathetic lot, pale and dressed in dirty clothes. Some of the prisoners are unaffected by the virus, while others suffer from its degenerative effects (see following descriptions). If the investigators are captured, the serpent people may have to place more than one prisoner in each cell to accommodate the newcomers. Profiles for the prisoners can be found on page 57.

Prisoner #1: Dahkeya (male), a middle-aged Chiricahua Apache, grim-faced and determined to escape from the clutches of the “walking snakes.” He is unaffected by the virus and, if released, he gladly assists his rescuers in escaping, savagely killing any of his reptilian captors he encounters. He speaks no English, only the Chiricahua Apache dialect.

Prisoner #2: Norroso (male), a young Chiricahua Apache. Overcome by the virus, he is listless and dull-eyed and must be led out of the complex.

Prisoner #3: Sonsee-array (female), a 30-year-old Chiricahua Apache. Due to the effects of the virus, she spends her time muttering and singing her death song, over and over, and must be led out of the complex.

Prisoner #4: Mandy Jacobs (female), an 8-year-old girl. She is (currently) mute and unreceptive due to the horrific experience of her capture. While she is unaffected by the virus, she must be led out of the complex. In time, she will recover and speak again. Her family (**Chapter 1, Stu Jacobs’ Ranch**, page 21) will be thrilled to see her again.

Prisoner #5: Virgil Wright (male), a grizzled man in his 40s, is a prospector (**Chapter 1, Sweetwater Saloon: Garnering Information**, page 16). The virus has sorely affected Wright and his attention span is measurable in seconds. He occasionally wanders around his cell, picking up things and examining them for a few seconds before moving onto another item that catches his eye. He wanders off, oblivious to his surroundings, if released, and must be closely watched and stewarded to safety.

Prisoner #6: Hiram Colby (male), this man is the spitting image of Hiram Colby, the wiry, scruffy prospector from Stillwater. Indeed, this is the real Colby, whose blood was taken to create the disguise serum used by the serpent man spy. Suffering from the effects of the virus, the real Colby has amnesia, with no memory of who he was nor his life before this point.

Prisoner #7: Prosper “Proz” Dickinson (male), a lanky young hand from a ranch west of Stillwater. Proz is eager to escape, but due to the effects of the virus, in any stressful situation there is a 50% chance that he freezes up and becomes catatonic until roused from his stupor with a successful **Psychology** roll. His condition may be permanent.

Prisoner #8: Jameson Burwell Cobb (male), a pot-bellied older man, is the liveliest of the prisoners and happy to see new human faces whether they’re here to free him or join him in captivity. Unaffected by the virus, the talkative Cobb relates how he was driving a wagon carrying medicine, trinkets, and tools when he was captured by these two-legged snakes and subjected to the most outrageous offenses. The former snake-oil salesman relishes the opportunity to escape this foul place.

Keeper note: clever investigators might think to use the blood of those prisoners unaffected by the virus to find a cure. At the Keeper’s discretion, investigators using the unaffected prisoners’ blood may formulate a cure with a successful combined **Science (Chemistry)** and **(Pharmacy)** roll at Hard difficulty.

Keeper note: if the serpent people manage to fend off an invasion of the complex, or if the human prisoners escape, the surviving serpent people gather up what weapons, documents, and items they can and flee to the other complex hidden in Shadow Mountain (see **Chapter 3**). Before they depart, they set the power crystal to overload and destroy the complex.

Plot note: the events of **Chapter 3** presume the serpent people based in Shadow Mountain have been alerted to the danger posed by the troublesome investigators. Once the investigators make their presence known in the lair, assume that Serpent Person #1, #2, or #3 sends a communiqué to Shadow Mountain, allowing Tim Hurst, the serpent man spy in Santa Rosita (see **Chapter 3, Keeper Information**, page 63), to be forewarned.

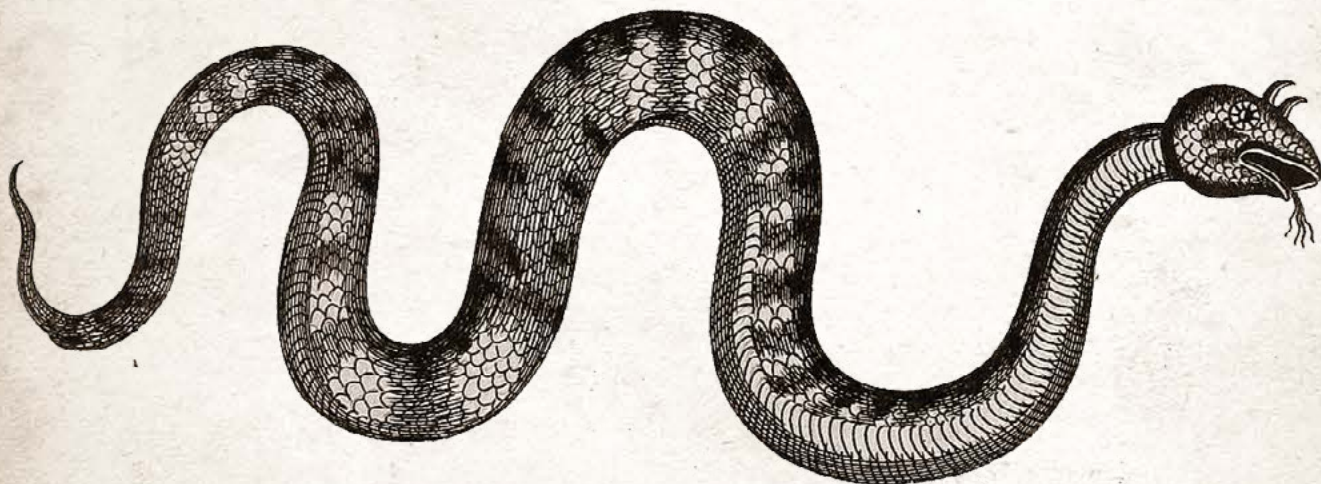
CAPTURED INVESTIGATORS

Apart from using captured investigators as test subjects for the virus (see **Chapter 1, Effects of the Virus**, page 26), the serpent people also take several blood samples, which are then used to manufacture doses of the disguise serum in the captured investigators' forms. Captive investigators should make a **Sanity** roll each day they are held captive and subject to experimentation, with a loss of 1/1D6 Sanity points from the hopelessness of their situation.

ESCAPING THE COMPLEX

There are several opportunities for the investigators to be seized by the serpent people. If such an event occurs, captured investigators are imprisoned in the cells on Level Six to await the terrible ministrations of the reptilian scientists. Possibilities for escape (apart from outside rescue) include attacking their captors while being moved from Level Six to Level Five for experimentation, faking an illness to draw their captors close enough for a surprise attack, or feigning paralysis and then grabbing a weapon or the crystal key to open the cells. An investigator with a piece of metal—or a successful **Electrical Repair** or **Hard Mechanical Repair** roll—might deactivate the magnetic lock on the cell door.

If the investigators cannot escape on their own, perhaps someone comes to their rescue. Taza and the Chiricahua could be the rescuers, if good relations have been established, by tracking the investigators or their captors to the mountain lair. Alternatively, Taza could elect to attack the complex in the hope of freeing his own people—captured investigators may have to bargain with Taza for their release. Another option is for Stu Jacobs (for his profile, see **Chapter 1**, page 30), along with some other townsfolk, to attempt a similar rescue, leading a posse on the kidnappers' trail—right into a nightmare of slithering horror.



CONCLUSION: AFTERMATH

Once the serpent people's lair has been dealt with, the Keeper should grant the following rewards, as well as an investigator development phase.

- Discovering the motives of the serpent people (infecting humans to cause degeneration): +1D3 Sanity points.
- Killing trognophides: + 1 Sanity point per serpent kin slain, to a maximum of 6 points.
- Killing serpent people: +1D6 Sanity points, to a maximum of 6 points.
- Rescuing prisoners: +1 Sanity point per prisoner saved (but only if the investigators did not have to be rescued themselves).
- Forming an alliance with the Chiricahua and/or winning their respect: +1D4 Sanity points and a necklace of teeth (see box, nearby).

If prisoners like little Mandy Jacobs are returned to their families, word of the investigators' heroism spreads. However, if the investigators antagonized Taza and his people, the angry Chiricahua may retaliate by attacking farms, ranches, and mining claims throughout the region, killing residents, burning buildings, and stealing cattle and guns. Such an outcome doesn't win the investigators friends in Stillwater, and, at the Keeper's discretion, deducts 1D3 Sanity points from each investigator.

Finally, there may be some technological items of the serpent people left in the investigators' hands, especially if the ophidian horrors were slain and their complex wasn't destroyed. It may take the investigators weeks, months, or even years to figure out how to use some of these devices if they haven't seen them used before.

With the ophidian scientists' laboratory destroyed, the investigators may believe they've seen the last of the serpent people and their diabolical plans for altering Earth to their own design. Unfortunately, those plans are about to be put into action again not far from Stillwater, but on a far greater scale.

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

Characters are grouped by association; note that some include a Luck value and pulp talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games, which can be ignored for *Call of Cthulhu*.

INDEPENDENTS

Taza, a.k.a. "Cruzado,"

age 33, leader of the Chiricahua Apache

STR 75	CON 80	SIZ 75	DEX 65	INT 65
APP 50	POW 70	EDU 55	SAN 68	HP 15
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 8	MP: 14	Luck: 40

Combat

Brawl	70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4 or large knife 1D6+1D4
.45 Colt revolver	45% (22/9), damage 1D10+2
.44 Henry rifle	50% (25/10), damage 2D6+1
Dodge	60% (30/12)

Pulp Talents

- **Endurance:** gains a bonus die when attempting CON rolls.
- **Shadow:** reduce difficulty by one step or gains bonus die to Stealth rolls; able to make two surprise attacks.

Skills

Climb 75%, Intimidate 70%, Jump 60%, Language (English) 15%, Language (Chiricahua Apache Dialect) 65%, Listen 55%, Natural World 70%, Navigate 65%, Psychology 50%, Ride 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 75%, Throw 45%, Track 70%, Trap 60%.

NECKLACE OF TEETH

Made from the teeth of mountain lions, these necklaces identify the wearer as friends of the Chiricahua, and bestow a bonus die to any social skill roll when dealing with most Apache groups (certainly any in the New Mexico Territory).

CHIRICAHUA APACHE, AGES 13-60

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	65	60	70	65	65	80	70	70	60	40
CON	70	60	75	70	60	65	80	65	65	55
SIZ	60	70	65	60	70	70	70	80	55	40
DEX	65	60	50	45	70	60	75	55	65	70
INT	65	60	60	65	70	55	65	60	70	55
POW	55	45	55	65	60	55	45	60	60	50
APP	55	65	60	65	50	45	55	40	65	65
EDU	60	55	50	55	65	45	55	50	55	40
SAN	55	45	55	65	60	55	45	60	60	50
HP	13	13	14	13	13	13	15	14	12	9
DB	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	0	-1
Build	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	-1
Move	9	7	8	8	8	8	8	7	9	8
MP	11	9	11	13	12	11	9	12	12	10

(#1-#8 adult males, #9 adult female, #10 child)

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+DB
or large knife 1D6+DB
(#1-#4) .44 Henry rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
(#5-#7) .45 Colt revolver 45% (22/9), damage 1D10+2
(#8-#9) Bow 65% (32/13), damage 1D6+½DB
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Climb 65%, First Aid 45%, Intimidate 55%, Jump 50%,
Language (English) 10%, Language (Chiricahua Apache
Dialect) 60%, Listen 50%, Natural World 60%, Navigate 60%,
Occult 20%, Ride 50%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 70%, Throw
45%, Track 70%, Trap 60%.



PRISONERS OF THE SERPENT PEOPLE, TEST SUBJECTS

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
STR	50	60	50	35	70	45	60	50
CON	60	55	70	50	55	60	65	70
SIZ	65	60	45	35	65	55	60	80
DEX	45	55	60	55	55	70	50	50
INT	50	55	60	45	60	70	65	70
POW	50	45	55	70	50	60	55	45
APP	50	55	60	70	45	55	50	50
EDU	40	45	50	40	60	65	55	65
SAN	41	39	46	63	42	54	45	36
HP	12	11	11	8	12	11	12	15
DB	0	0	0	-1	+1D4	0	0	+1D4
Build	0	0	0	-1	1	0	0	1
Move	7	8	9	8	8	8	8	7
MP	10	9	11	14	10	12	11	9

Prisoner #1: Dabkeya

Prisoner #2: Norroso

Prisoner #3: Sonsee-array

Prisoner #4: Mandy Jacobs

Prisoner #5: Virgil Wright

Prisoner #6: Hiram Colby

Prisoner #7: Prosper "Proz" Dickinson

Prisoner #8: Jameson Burwell Cobb

Combat

(#1-#3) Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3
(#4) Brawl	25% (12/5), damage 1D3-1
(#5-#7) Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+DB
(#8) Brawl	35% (17/7), damage 1D3+1D4
(all) Dodge	30% (15/6)

Weapons (not on person)

(#1-#3) Large knife	60% (30/12), damage 1D6
(#1-#3) Bow	50% (25/10), damage 1D6
(#5-#6) Rifle	55% (27/11), damage 2D6+1
(#7) Shotgun	40% (20/8), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
(#8) Revolver	40% (20/8), damage 1D10+2

Skills

(adjust as needed) Climb 40%, First Aid 35%, Listen 40%, Ride 40%, Stealth 45%, Spot Hidden 35%, Throw 40%.

MONSTERS

Serpent Person #1, *geneticist*

STR 50 CON 45 SIZ 50 DEX 65 INT 100
APP — POW 70 EDU — SAN — HP 9
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 14

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (weapon, bite, claw)

Poison: bite is venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D8 damage.

Fighting 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Bite 35% (17/7), damage 1D8+poison
Beam weapon crystal 40% (20/8), damage 1D8
Paralysis grenade 35% (17/7), stunned for 1D10+5 rounds (negated with Extreme CON roll)
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Anthropology 25%, Climb 35%, Cthulhu Mythos 50%, History 75%, Listen 35%, Mechanical Repair 55%, Medicine 55%, Natural World 65%, Language (English) 30%, Language (Naacal) 90%, Science (Biology) 85%, Science (Chemistry) 90%, Science (Geology) 25%, Science (Pharmacy) 75%, Spot Hidden 40%, Throw 35%.

Armor: 1-point scales; armor crystal providing 10-point armor for 5 rounds.

Spells: Cause Disease, Chant of Thoth, Cloud Memory, Contact Yig, Create Zombie, Mindblast, Wrack.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a serpent person.

Serpent Person #2, *technician*

STR 55 CON 50 SIZ 45 DEX 75 INT 90
APP — POW 65 EDU — SAN — HP 9
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 13

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (weapon, bite, claw)

Poison: bite is venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D8 damage.

Fighting 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Bite 30% (15/6), damage 1D8+poison
Beam weapon crystal 60% (30/12), damage 1D8

Paralysis grenade 35% (17/7), stunned for 1D10+5 rounds (negated with Extreme CON roll)
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Climb 45%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, Electrical Repair 70%, History 50%, Jump 40%, Listen 40%, Mechanical Repair 85%, Medicine 20%, Natural World 35%, Language (English) 15%, Language (Naacal) 75%, Science (Biology) 25%, Science (Chemistry) 30%, Science (Geology) 60%, Science (Pharmacy) 15%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 30%, Throw 35%.

Armor: 1-point scales.

Spells: Dominate, Enthrall Victim, Flesh Ward.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a serpent person.

Serpent Person #3, *warrior*

STR 65 CON 70 SIZ 65 DEX 75 INT 80
APP — POW 65 EDU — SAN — HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 13

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (weapon, bite, claw)

Poison: bite is venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D8 damage.

Fighting 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4
Bite 40% (20/8), damage 1D8+poison
Beam weapon crystal 65% (32/13), damage 1D8
Explosive grenade 40% (20/8), damage 4D6/3D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge 60% (30/12)

Skills

Climb 65%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, History 40%, Jump 55%, Listen 50%, Mechanical Repair 35%, Medicine 20%, Natural World 50%, Language (English) 15%, Language (Naacal) 70%, Science (Biology) 25%, Science (Chemistry) 20%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 55%, Throw 40%.

Armor: 1-point scales.

Spells: Command Eagle, Contact Yig, Enthrall Victim, Wrack.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a serpent person.

TROUBLE ON KNIFE CUT MESA

Serpent Person #4, warrior/technician

STR 55 CON 50 SIZ 55 DEX 80 INT 75
 APP — POW 60 EDU — SAN — HP 10
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 12

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (weapon, bite, claw)

Poison: bite is venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D8 damage.

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage 1D3
Bite	35% (17/7), damage 1D8+poison
Beam weapon crystal	50% (25/10), damage 1D8
Paralysis grenade	30% (15/6), stunned for 1D10+5 rounds (negated with Extreme CON roll)
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Climb 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, Electrical Repair 50%, History 50%, Jump 55%, Listen 40%, Mechanical Repair 75%, Natural World 45%, Language (Naacal) 70%, Science (Biology) 30%, Science (Chemistry) 45%, Science (Geology) 40%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 45%, Throw 40%.

Armor: 1-point scales.

Spells: Chant of Thoth, Dominate, Wither Limb.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a serpent person.

Serpent Person #5, evolved kin

Genetic manipulation has increased this trognophide's intelligence and physical stature.

STR 55 CON 65 SIZ 45 DEX 65 INT 50
 APP — POW 55 EDU — SAN — HP 11
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 11

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (bite or claw)

Poison: bite is venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D4 damage.

Fighting	45% (22/9), damage 1D4
Bite	45% (22/9), damage 1D4+poison
Dodge	60% (20/12)

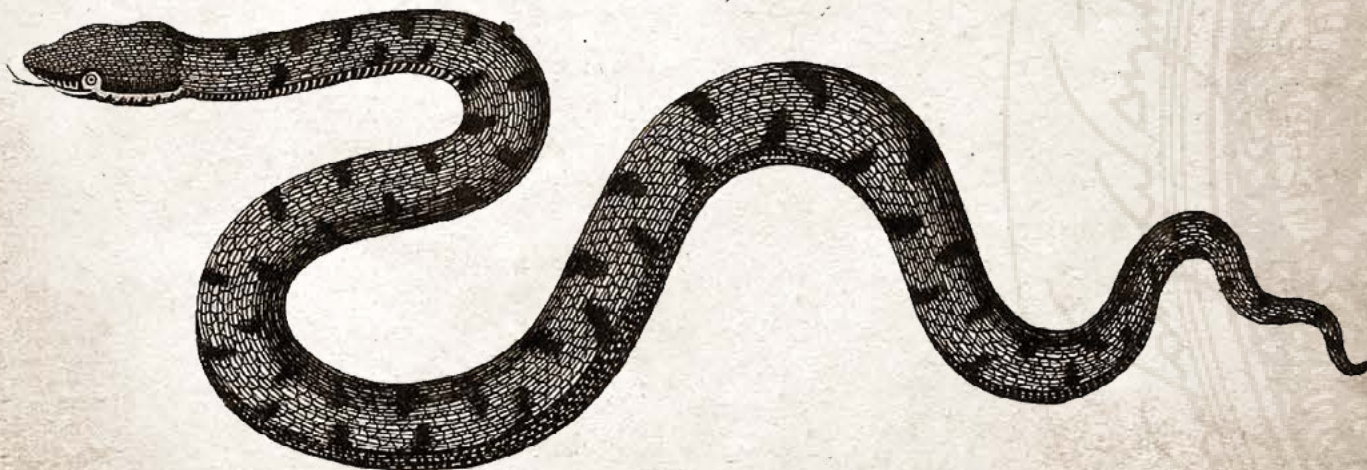
Skills

Climb 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Jump 40%, Listen 44%, Mechanical Repair 35%, Natural World 50%, Language (Naacal) 40%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 65%, Throw 45%.

Armor: 1-point scales.

Spells: Command Eagle, Evil Eye.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see this evolved worm of the earth.





TROGNOPHIDES, DEGENERATE SERPENT KIN

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	55	45	60	65	55	60	40	60	55	20
CON	60	55	50	60	55	65	55	45	50	25
SIZ	40	45	35	25	35	45	50	35	30	25
DEX	45	55	65	50	55	60	65	60	70	50
INT	25	30	35	30	35	30	30	30	30	25
POW	55	45	40	35	55	55	60	50	35	30
HP	10	10	8	8	9	11	10	8	8	5
DB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-2
Build	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-2
Move	9	8	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8
MP	11	9	8	7	11	11	12	10	7	6

#1-#6 humanoid, #7-#9 large serpentine, #10 small serpentine)

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (weapon, claw, or bite for humanoids, or bite if serpentine)

Poison: bite is venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D4 damage.

- (#1-#6) Fighting 40% (20/8), damage claws 1D4 or stone knife 1D4
- (#7-#9) Bite 40% (20/8), damage 1D4+poison
- (#10) Bite 30% (15/6), damage 1D4-2+poison
- (#1-#6) Thrown rock 40% (20/8), damage 1D3

Skills

Climb 80%, Stealth 80%, Spot Hidden 40%.

Armor: 1-point scales.

Spells: none.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a trognophide in humanoid form; 0/1D4 Sanity points for serpentine form.



NEW SPELLS FOR DOWN DARKER TRAILS

Cause Disease (variant)

- **Cost:** 8+ magic points; 1D4 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 5 rounds

Afflicts the target with a feverish illness resembling cholera, malaria, pneumonia, and so on. For the spell to take effect, the caster must win an opposed POW roll against the target. If the target wins, there is no effect. To cast the spell, the target must be visible to the caster, who recites a short chant. If the caster wins, symptoms such as high fever, nausea, vomiting, dehydration, and loss of concentration follow. The target loses 1D6 points of STR, CON, and DEX (roll separately for each) per day for a number of days equal to the number of magic points the caster has invested in the spell. If any of the characteristics reach zero, the target dies. If the target survives, they regain lost points naturally (1D6 points per day to original values). Bed rest is the only treatment that seems to maintain clarity of mind, although other magic may restore lost points more quickly. The spell is broken if the caster dies.

Command Eagle (Command Animal variant)

- **Cost:** 1 magic point; 1D3 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 1 round

The caster commands one animal of a specified species to obey a single command—in this case, an eagle. The command is answered naturally, the eagle moving toward the caster. The

eagle is compelled to obey one order. Upon completion, the eagle is freed and cannot be compelled again for one day. The caster's command must be simple, specific, visualized, and limited in duration. The eagle begins to act in the round following the spell casting. The command must be something that the eagle could naturally accomplish, such as "attack that human" or "take that gun away from that human." The spell usually lasts until the caster's command has been enacted, within 1D10+5 minutes, or if the eagle dies.

Golden Eagle

The golden eagle is a very large raptor, larger specimens being 40 inches (102 cm) in length. Its wingspan may reach 7 feet 8 inches (2.34 m).

STR 60	CON 50	SIZ 35	DEX 95	POW 60
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 5/12	*HP 8	

**Flying.*

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (bite, claw)

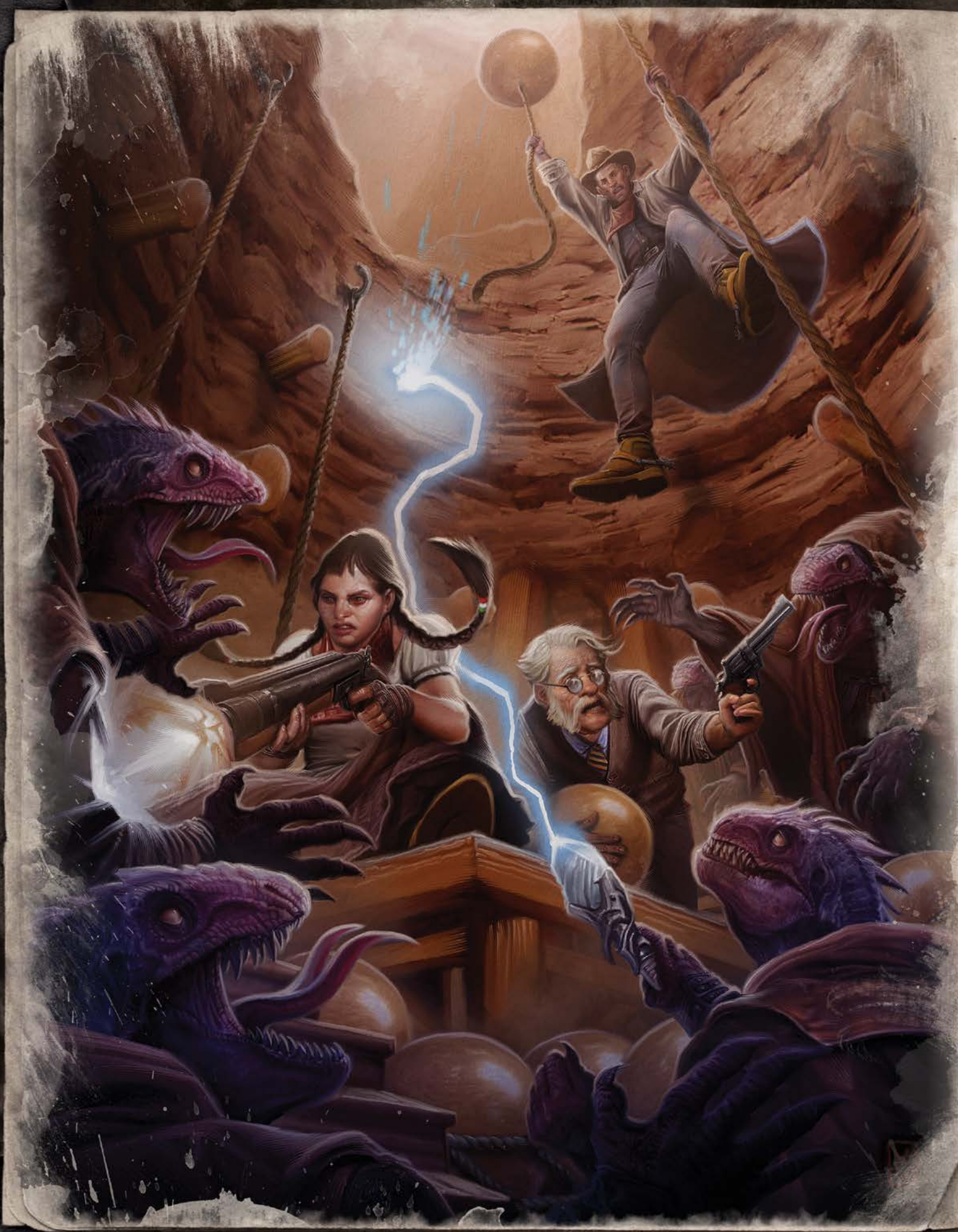
Fighting	45% (22/9), damage 1D6
Dodge	47% (23/9)

Skills

Spot Hidden 90%.

Armor: none.





THE SHADOW OVER STILLWATER PART 3: SHATTERED EARTH, POISONED SKY

The final chapter of **The Shadow Over Stillwater** finds the investigators recuperating in Stillwater following their adventures on Knife Cut Mesa and the mountains north of the town. The investigators may believe that they have destroyed the source of the mind-altering virus affecting Stillwater; however, reports are reaching the town about the walking dead being spotted in Southwood Pass. In addition, after hearing of the outbreak of bizarre behavior in Stillwater, the nearby town of Santa Rosita has instituted quarantine procedures for all those seeking entrance.

KEEPER INFORMATION

The final stage of the serpent people's experiment to change the fate of mankind and their own bestial brethren is about to be set into motion. While the serpent people in the laboratory north of Stillwater worked to create and perfect the mind-altering virus, other ophidians have been at work in Shadow Mountain, seeking to create an artificial volcano to cause an eruption. The gas and ashes spread through the atmosphere by such an eruption are intended to scatter the virus across a vast swathe of land. To this end, the serpent people have genetically engineered some trognophides, rapidly evolving them into burrowing horrors to slowly erode the earth's crust and create enough pressure to force a powerful explosion.

Santa Rosita has been rocked by the tremors caused by the tunneling of the burrowing horrors created by the serpent people. The wily serpents, however, have been smart enough to avoid rousing suspicions and have deployed one of their own in human form to spy on the locals. Tim Hurst, the local tailor,

was abducted several days ago and is being held captive in the cellar of his house while the serpent man spy uses disguise serum to take Hurst's form and monitor events in town.

As a result of the investigators' presumed routing of the serpent people's laboratory near Stillwater, the false Hurst has convinced the mayor of Santa Rosita to quarantine anyone trying to enter the town. As a consequence, the residents are now suspicious of outsiders. The serpent man spy has, on occasion, used disguise serum to also become other citizens, so as to subtly manipulate public policy. When the investigators arrive, he first tries to poison them and then attempts to frame them for murder.

When the investigators arrive in Santa Rosita they find that fear of the walking dead, combined with rumors about the weird epidemic in Stillwater, has made the locals paranoid. The matter is made worse due to the earthquakes setting everyone's nerves on edge. Soon, the serpent people's preparations within Shadow Mountain will be complete and the volcano will be ready to erupt. In time, the serpent people aim to create similar experiments all over the country and around the world, eroding thousands of years of human evolution, and allowing a great Third Empire of the serpent people to rise from the ashes of mankind's fall.

INVESTIGATOR INFORMATION: TROUBLE IN SANTA ROSITA

The events of this chapter begin with the investigators returning to Stillwater to recuperate from their exploits on Knife Cut Mesa, and in the serpent people's lair. Maybe they are ready to return home, believing they have solved the mystery of the town's recent bizarre behavior.

Opposite: The virus holding chamber

While the investigators are putting themselves back together in Stillwater, Bob Hurley's wagon rattles into town, days late, and the hulking freight driver is not happy about it. At the Sweetwater Saloon, the big man complains loudly that he was held up for two days over in Santa Rosita:

"Those crazy bastards made me park my wagon and sleep in a cabin with a couple of other pilgrims for two nights! Something about making sure I wasn't sick. They had armed guards and they said nobody was allowed into town without spending a full day and night in 'coranteen, on account of them bein' afraid travelers be spreading the same disease that bin driving folks in Stillwater crazy as hoot owls. There don't appear to be anything wrong with the folks in Santa Rosita, though most of 'em were nervous around strangers. Hardly surprising, what with the dead still walking and earthquakes they bin havin', rattling their brains all around."

If the investigators don't take the hint, other travelers can relate similar tales or tell of fearful rides through Southwood Pass, pursued by long-dead men. Apparently, there are still a few risen dead loose in the area. Given the investigators' recent success, the residents of Stillwater are inclined to suggest that it's best not to leave a job unfinished, and that the investigators should ride out to Santa Rosita to mop up any of the dead still creeping about.

Santa Rosita is a day's ride west of Stillwater, through Southwood Pass. If the investigators want to ride out, Marshal Whitman offers to hold Hank Hanratty until they return (assuming he was taken alive).

RUNNING THIS CHAPTER

While the scenario presumes Tim Hurst, the serpent man spy, is watching out for the investigators and takes steps to prevent them uncovering the schemes of the serpent people, things may have transpired differently in **Chapter 2**. If Hurst is not alerted to the investigators, the events of this chapter still happen but are delayed a little.

Initially, Hurst notes the investigators' arrival at the quarantine cabin (**The Quarantine**, page 65) through the scrying crystal he has placed there. If not aware of the threat they pose, he only acts after they have arrived in town and begun asking questions, which draws his attention. That night or the following morning, Hurst poisons the food in the saloon or guesthouse where they are staying—with another guest fulfilling the function of Carlos Villega (**Deadly Breakfast**, page 67).

As written, **The Murder** (page 74) takes place on the day the investigators leave quarantine but could be delayed by a day or so, to account for Hurst's lack of awareness of them. Dependent on how the Keeper wishes to pace the scenario, it

could be delayed for a few days, providing more time for the investigators to settle into Santa Rosita and speak to the locals, presenting opportunities for extended conversations and clue finding. Note the pressure of time, with the increase in the severity of the earthquakes (**Earth Tremors**, page 67).

The situation in Santa Rosita should come to a head fairly quickly. While clues direct the investigators to Shadow Mountain, they must overcome the challenges set before them by Tim Hurst and the townsfolk in general, which act to obfuscate and endanger the posse, as well as distract from the serpent people in the mountain. Try to drive home the notion that time is against the investigators, and that with a whole town set against them, they are the only ones who can save the day.

SOUTHWOOD PASS: THE ROAD TO SANTA ROSITA

Southwood Pass is a wide and winding pass through the mountains. At some point during their journey, the investigators should be surprised by a group of 2D3 walking corpses (mostly skeletal ones). As the investigators deal with one or two of the dead staggering out from behind rocks or brush to attack, the other zombies lurch out of hiding to join the fray. Riding out of melee range and picking them off with rifles should make dealing with the undead fairly easy—this is just a hint that the plague of walking dead might not be over just yet.

Keeper note: additionally, consider an encounter with 1D6 Chiricahua Apache from Taza's band. Depending on the outcome of previous meetings, this might result in an exchange of friendly greetings or a revenge-fueled attack.

THE CREEPING DEAD

The awakening of the dead in and around Stillwater was an unintended side effect of the early test versions of the serpent people's virus. The ophidian scientists didn't know how to recreate this effect, and so it was not duplicated in subsequent batches of the virus; thus, later releases of the virus no longer reanimate the dead. Nevertheless, there are still a few animated corpses creeping about, and some have wandered as far as Santa Rosita. The investigators and the residents of Stillwater have probably whittled down most of the walking dead in that area, so the few remaining stragglers are encountered *en route* and around Santa Rosita. Use the profiles for the risen dead from **Chapter 1** (page 34) to create occasional encounters with 1D3 of these stragglers throughout this chapter.

THE QUARANTINE

Santa Rosita is about a day's ride from Stillwater. Assuming the investigators leave in the morning, it is near dark by the time they reach the outskirts of Santa Rosita. As they ride toward the lights of town they see several wagons lined up to block the road, and two men armed with rifles step into the thoroughfare calling for the investigators to stop. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll spies four more men hiding behind the wagons, their guns aimed at the investigators. The guards tell the riders there's a quarantine around the town and that anyone wanting in has to stay a full night and day to be admitted—no exceptions. They say there's been an outbreak of some kind of "loco disease" over in Stillwater, and the residents of Santa Rosita are making sure it doesn't spread here. Prospective visitors are to be disarmed and sent to a nearby cabin until they're cleared; food and water are provided, and their horses will be cared for. Visitors can either accept these conditions or ride around town, but anyone caught trying to enter the town without clearance will be shot.

Keeper note: quarantine points (roadblocks) are noted "Q" on the nearby map of Santa Rosita.

If the investigators agree to be quarantined, the guards cover their own faces with bandanas while they search the party for weapons; anything openly carried is confiscated, but hidden weapons aren't found if the investigator succeeds with a **Luck** roll. The investigators' hats and boots are also taken, to prevent any sneaking around. The prospective visitors are basically left with the clothes on their backs, with their gear and mounts being taken to a nearby barn with a padlocked door.

Quarantine Cabin

Quarantined investigators are taken to a cabin, an old stage depot from before Santa Rosita was settled. The structure comprises four rooms, the largest room being the main room cum kitchen, with a floor big enough to sleep four people comfortably, or twice that many uncomfortably. The other three rooms are small bedrooms able to accommodate one person on a bed and one on the floor; female guests are given these rooms for privacy. The place is sparsely furnished: a large table, rickety chairs, hard beds, and worn mattresses. The toilet is an outhouse about 75 yards (70 m) behind the cabin.

Graffiti has been carved into the walls and furniture. Scattered across the fireplace mantle are several pretty-looking rocks and some crudely carved wooden figurines; closer inspection or a **Spot Hidden** roll notes that one plum-shaped



The quarantine cabin residents

CABIN GUESTS

If required, all of the following cabin guests could be used as replacement investigators during this scenario; their profiles can be found on page 85 at the end of the scenario.

Claude Kinsey, age 37, gambler

The soft-spoken Kinsey is a professional gambler (Gambling 75%) who abhors cheaters (backed up by his 65% Handgun skill). To pass the time, he plays with a deck of cards while enticing his “fellow prisoners” (as he calls everyone) to join him in a game. If he catches anyone cheating, he casually sweeps the table-stakes toward himself, saying the game is forfeit. Kinsey managed to sneak a derringer past the quarantine guards. He is just passing through on his way to Kansas City.

- **Description:** small, lean, and blond-haired, with cold blue eyes.
- **Traits:** genial and softly spoken, he has a slightly effeminate manner of speech.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** wants to gamble and clean the investigators out.

Judge Rupert Hill, age 55, circuit judge

Partial to a drink of whiskey, though not a drunkard, Hill sits quietly and observes his fellow quarantine guests, sizing everyone up. If approached, he is friendly and says the quarantine isn't strictly legal, but it's their town, and they have guns, and it's not like anyone's being robbed. The judge is up for a few hands of cards, and he has a full bottle of whiskey secreted in his jacket.

- **Description:** average build.
- **Traits:** friendly and fond of whiskey.

- **Roleplaying hooks:** something of a peacemaker, Hill may step in with calming words if sparks fly between any of the cabin guests. He is also happy to join a card game for a few hands.

Matt McCoy, age 42, cattle buyer

A cattle-buyer from Lincoln County, McCoy is nervous—understandable, since he's carrying \$5,000 hidden about his person, which he needs to buy stock from a rancher out west. He avoids getting into conversation, either ignoring questions or answering with only a grunt, and does not play cards. He fears that someone will discover his money and rob him.

- **Description:** stout and nervous-looking.
- **Traits:** keeps to himself and avoids conversation.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** carrying \$5,000, hidden on his person.

Johnny Crabaugh, age 22, drifter

Crabaugh is a drifter, down on his luck and looking for work. He doesn't have enough money to play cards but watches and comments on the game to pass the time. Crabaugh is wanted in Texas (\$100 reward) for rustling cattle and for shooting a man (in self-defense), but he's not a bad fellow.

- **Description:** tall and skinny, unshaven and seedy-looking. He exudes an unpleasant smell.
- **Traits:** talkative, he asks a lot of questions and likes to give a running commentary on what everyone else is doing.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** liable to annoy most everyone in the cabin, but mostly harmless, he asks if the investigators have work he could fulfill. If he gets drunk, he may boast about being wanted in Texas.

rock is actually a crystal resembling those among the trinkets and decorations seen throughout Stillwater. Depending on the investigators' knowledge, this may be recognized as part of the serpent people's surveillance system; indeed it is just that, placed by Tim Hurst, the serpent man spy in Santa Rosita to watch out for the meddling investigators. For those searching about the cabin, call for a **Spot Hidden** or **Luck** roll to find lost or abandoned items: a bandanna, near-empty

bottles of whiskey, a bullet or two, coins, buttons, a Bible, a penknife, a pouch of tobacco, and so on.

The investigators share the quarantine cabin with four other guests: a gambler named Claude Kinsey, circuit judge Rupert Hill, a businessman named Matt McCoy, and a smelly, unshaven drifter named Johnny Crabaugh (see the **Cabin Guests** box nearby for details of each). Simple meals are brought in at breakfast and supper, along with fresh

water. If they want to offer some money, the guests can ask the guards to bring better food and drink.

Quarantine Guards

The guards are from Santa Rosita (ranch hands, bartenders, merchants, deputies, and so on), working in shifts to prevent anyone from entering the town. Each of the roads in and out are watched by six armed men, while two pairs of men ride circuits around the town, day and night. Four more men guard the cabin: one at each door, and two who roam around the area day and night.

The guards and townspeople are fearful of catching the weird malady that has affected the people of Stillwater. As such, they have little tolerance for anyone trying to avoid or escape quarantine. Such actions, or any violent or irrational acts, are taken to be proof that the violator is stricken with the madness-disease. If not in the heat of battle, the guards may warn the miscreant to stop what they are doing and surrender; failing this, they may be shot—survivors are treated by **Doctor Peter Martell** (page 70).

Deadly Breakfast

When the investigators arrive and are held in quarantine, Tim Hurst, the serpent man spy, hears of their coming and, using a scrying crystal, realizes they are the ones responsible for the attack on the laboratory north of Stillwater. Hurst decides to kill these meddlers before they can further damage his people's plans, by poisoning their next meal (probably breakfast) with cyanide, using the Cloud Memory spell to effect his plan.

When the meal (meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and beer) is taken out to those quarantined, Carlos Villega, one of the guards, helps himself to a plate of food before the rest is taken to the guests in the cabin. Ask each investigator to make a **Luck** roll, with success meaning that the individual has not begun to eat and hears Villega outside choking and gasping. Those who fail the roll have eaten some of the poison-laced food and must make an Extreme **CON** roll, with those failing suffering 4D10 damage in 1D10+5 minutes; success halves the damage. Within 1D4+1 minutes, those who ingested the poison begin to exhibit problematic signs: dizziness, convulsions, or fainting. If quick to react to such events, the investigators may further reduce any damage by half if they succeed in a Hard **First Aid** roll (forcing charcoal down the victim's throat, making them vomit up the food, and so on). Likewise, a doctor making a successful **Medicine** roll can diagnose the symptoms as poisoning and act to reduce the harm.

Keeper note: as the cyanide is potentially lethal, the Keeper may wish to limit the potential for investigator death by having Carlos Villega begin to choke and gasp as the food is brought in, but before the investigators get a chance to eat it,



EARTH TREMORS

The serpent people's manipulation of the earth is causing tremors that have been rumbling in the area for several months now. For the past few days the tremors have increased in magnitude, with the burrowing horrors' digging ever closer to causing an eruption of Shadow Mountain. The tremors are now causing minor damage in and around Santa Rosita with broken windows and glassware, minor structural damage, and rockslides in the mountains west of town.

The tremors continue once the investigators reach Santa Rosita—one such tremor should occur while the party is quarantined. Each day thereafter, there is a 35% chance that a tremor occurs sometime that day or night. Windows rattle, glasses, and bottles fall and shatter, buildings shift and groan, horses rear and bolt, dogs howl and growl, people scream, children cry, rocks and boulders tumble down from the hill- and mountain-sides, and so forth. Unless the Keeper wishes otherwise, these events shouldn't be directly harmful to the investigators, merely unnerving and unsettling.



providing enough of a clue not to consume the meal. Should one or more investigators die, the Keeper can introduce the other **Cabin Guests** (see box nearby) as potential replacement characters. Alternatively, the incident can be toned down by changing the poison from cyanide to a special concoction of rattlesnake venom, which carries 2D10 damage at full strength, with more or less the same symptoms.

If the investigators think to treat the luckless Villega, they may be able to prevent his death, earning some respect and thanks for the deed. Clearly, someone in Santa Rosita wants them dead. If asked, the guards say the meals are prepared at **Ma Richert's Restaurant** (page 18); however, nobody at the restaurant knows anything about the poisoning (thanks to the spy's Cloud Memory spell).

Release

Once the investigators have spent a full night and day in quarantine, the guards return their guns and gear and give them permission to enter Santa Rosita. Each investigator is given a slip of paper, signed by Deputy Sheriff Wayne Valentine, confirming their fitness and is told not to lose it as long as they're in town, as any visitor caught without a slip is subject to arrest.

SANTA ROSITA

Santa Rosita is a medium-sized town of about a thousand people; mostly farmers, ranchers, and copper-mining prospectors. Where Stillwater is small and rough, lively and individualistic, Santa Rosita is larger and more civilized, but also more conservative. The people of Santa Rosita are close-knit and suspicious of strangers—a situation exacerbated by the recent earth tremors and the widespread concern over the epidemic in Stillwater.

The town is laid out in a grid system, with almost all of the major businesses situated on the main street. Dozens of private homes (white picket fences, trees, and small gardens) line the side streets, while ranches and small farms are scattered up and down the passes. The town map (page 69) shows only the main businesses, which are briefly described below—the Keeper should feel free to add other businesses as desired.

SANTA ROSITA LOCATIONS

Profiles are provided for Mayor Shaw, Deputy Sheriff Valentine, Doctor Martell, and Tim Hurst (see **Characters and Monsters**, page 85). Use the **Miscellaneous Townspeople** (page 88) for other NPCs mentioned, adjusting professional skills (relevant to their specific occupations) to a range of 50% to 70% to reflect expertise.

Quarantine Points (“Q”)

Marked on the map as “Q,” these posts are positioned on the main roads into Santa Rosita. Armed men stop travelers from entering the town and ensure visitors undergo a 24-hour period of quarantine before they are admitted into the town. Each post consists of 4–6 guards armed with rifles, pistols, or shotguns (see **Quarantine Guards** profile, page 87), positioned behind a barricade of wagons or barrels. They shoot anyone who tries to force their way into Santa Rosita; otherwise, those who agree to be quarantined are taken to the old staging post that serves as the **Quarantine Cabin** (“A”). The guards change every 4–6 hours, and are drawn from townspeople, deputies, ranch-hands, and so forth. Two pairs of rifle-armed guards also ride separate circuits around the outskirts of town to prevent anyone from sneaking into Santa Rosita from off-road.

Quarantine Cabin (“25”)

An old stage depot on the outskirts of town where travelers are held until they are deemed fit to enter Santa Rosita. See **The Quarantine**, page 65.

1. Jameson’s Livery

The larger of the town’s livery stables. Nick Jameson usually has 1D3+3 horses for sale (\$60) or rent (\$10 a day plus a \$20 deposit), as well as saddles and riding gear. Customers can also keep their horses here for a few cents per day for food and lodging. A friend of the Deputy Sheriff Valentine, Jameson reports on anyone suspicious darkening his door.

2. First Baptist Church

A grand, white-painted structure with a bell tower, the First Baptist Church’s congregation draws from the great and good of Santa Rosita but is open to all who seek the grace of the Lord. The minister is Jethro Caddam, a fire and brimstone preacher who commands respect.

Keeper note: while, on the surface, everyone appears friendly, investigators attending a service may attempt a **Psychology** roll to note the suspicion in the congregation’s eyes; of course, if the investigators have already caused trouble in town these looks are more pointed, and a successful **Listen** roll overhears muttered comments that make it clear these outsiders are not welcome in God’s house.

3. Blacksmith

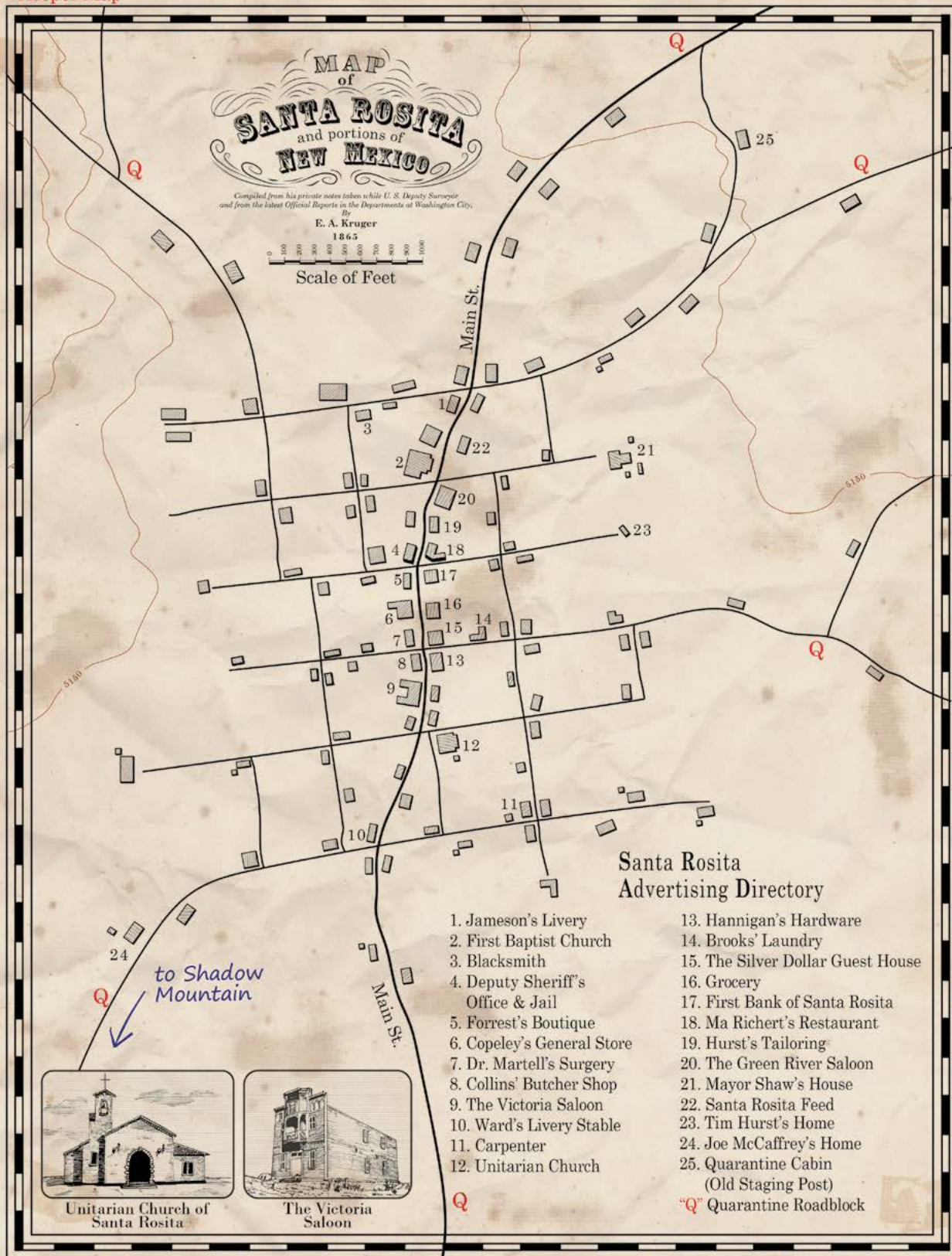
Joe West owns and runs the forge here, while his apprentice Jake Smith cleans and labors. West is a short, barrel-chested man, with a sardonic sense of humor. A misunderstanding a few years back means West has little love for Deputy Sheriff Valentine.

Keeper note: West is something of a creative genius when it comes to metalwork, so he could be of value to the investigators if they wish to fashion any fancy equipment.

4. Deputy Sheriff’s Office and Jail

The office comprises a large desk, some chairs, and a locked gun cabinet on the wall. Beyond Valentine’s office, a door leads to the back room filled with four jail cells. Valentine has four deputies: Sam Rockson, Jimmy O’Keef, Lester Mortimer, and Aaron Wallace, who follow his commands to the letter, although O’Keef (the youngest) is somewhat wayward at times.

Keeper Map



Wayne Valentine, age 41, the law

Deputy Sheriff Wayne Valentine is comparatively young; a former captain in the U.S. Army, now settled in Santa Rosita with his wife and three children. Valentine is a good lawman, and no fool; unfortunately, he's subject to the authority of Mayor Shaw, and may be turned against the investigators through the whispers of Tim Hurst.

Valentine is genuinely afraid of the spread of whatever malady is affecting the people of Stillwater and stands by the quarantine until he believes the risk of disease has passed. As far as aiding the investigators, Valentine is too occupied with maintaining the quarantine to be of much help—the last thing he needs is a bunch of meddlesome outsiders distracting him from the job in hand.

- **Description:** rugged and clean-shaven, broad-shouldered and above average height.
- **Traits:** honest and God-fearing, has no time for fools or troublemakers.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** a busy man charged with the protection of Santa Rosita, he dutifully follows the directions of the mayor. If shown irrefutable proof of wrongdoing or inhuman horror, he may become a staunch ally of the investigators.

5. Forrest's Boutique

Serving all the ladies in Santa Rosita, Genevieve Forrest is a seamstress of good repute whose fashions are the talk of the town. Her reassuringly expensive dresses can be seen worn at social occasions and church services. Having lost her husband some years ago, Ms. Forrest is not keen to find another.

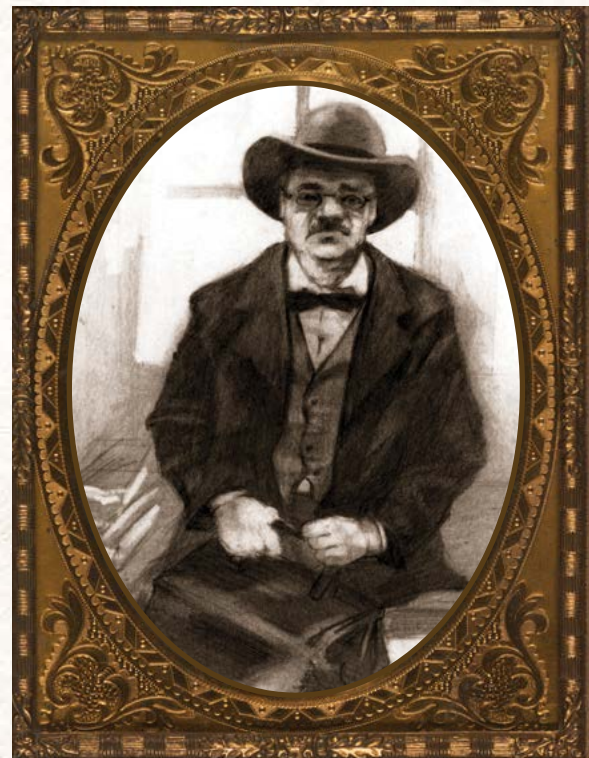
Keeper note: female investigators are liable to be quizzed about Stillwater and their business in general by Ms. Forrest, should they patronize the store. In return, they are likely to hear some of the gossip described in **Rumors** (page 74).

6. Copeley's General Store

Part owned by Mayor Shaw and Timothy Strand and his wife, Martha, the store stocks most non-hardware goods, from clothes to baking goods, kitchen goods, small household items, and so on.

7. Doctor Peter Martell's Home and Surgery

The house contains both Martell's surgery and his home that he shares with his wife, Babette, and their children, Timothy (8) and Ruth (10). The doctor's surgery takes up the front half of the ground floor, with a small consultation room and a larger treatment/operation space.



Deputy Sheriff Wayne Valentine

Doctor Peter Martell

Peter Martell, age 51, general practitioner

Martell is a country doctor, used to taking care of broken bones, cuts, and a few internal ailments. He strongly supports the quarantine and has no answers or theories about the strange malady afflicting Stillwater.

- **Description:** an owl-like appearance, with round wire spectacles perched over a graying mustache.
- **Traits:** faithful and law-abiding.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** he reports any suspicious investigator activities, crimes, or wounds to Deputy Sheriff Valentine. Will be dumbfounded and incredulous if presented with the body of a serpent person.

8. Collins' Butcher Shop

Brothers John and Jason Collins sell fresh meat from the store and have a butchery workshop out back. Apart from beef and chicken, they also prepare and sell various wild game (from birds and rabbits to deer).

9. The Victoria Saloon

Local businessmen seeking a drink or a high-stakes poker game generally patronize the Victoria, run by Mike Mercer. There are four rooms available for guests to hire. Patrons here send for the deputy sheriff rather than take on rowdies personally.

10. Ward's Livery Stable

Damian Ward's stable is smaller and more poorly maintained than Jameson's, and he usually has only 1D3 animals on hand to sell (\$50) or rent (\$10 a day plus a \$15 deposit). He charges less per day for stable fees and is much less likely (with suitable encouragement) to ask awkward questions or inform the deputy sheriff of any suspicious activity on the part of his customers.

11. Carpenter

Terence Hillyer and his team of four workers make all manner of furniture, boxes, and coffins, while also building homes and other structures in the town. A feud between Hillyer and Joe West the blacksmith has existed since anyone can remember; however, no one remembers what caused the feud in the first place, and neither party cares to elaborate when asked.

12. Unitarian Church of Santa Rosita

A smaller building than the First Baptist Church, the Unitarian Church lies three blocks down Main Street and opens its doors to all. Francis Clay ministers to a congregation drawn from across the social spectrum of Santa Rosita, and he is a far more forgiving personality than Jethro Caddam.

13. Hannigan's Hardware

Carries tools of all kinds, including farm implements and household items (stoves, lamps, oil, and so on). Hannigan's is also the only place in town to buy guns and ammunition, though old Brad Hannigan won't sell either to strangers without a signed quarantine slip. There are a few shotguns (12–20 gauge), Winchester rifles, and Colt revolvers here, but nothing uncommon or fancy. Unadvertised, Hannigan has four and a half cases of dynamite and two cases of blasting caps in a back room; however, he'd have to be sure he could trust whoever wanted to purchase any of it. Despite Hannigan's reluctance to sell explosives to strangers, if Deputy Sheriff Valentine could be convinced of the need, he could get Hannigan to sell them to the investigators.

14. Brooks' Laundry

Maybelle and Arty Brook operate the largest laundry service in town and know most of the gossip that's going around (see **Rumors**, page 74). Well-to-do investigators are treated with respect and servility, while others enjoy a less than welcoming atmosphere.

15. The Silver Dollar Guest House

Six rooms are available to rent from husband and wife Dillon and Sarah Tawny. The rooms are clean and well cared for, with breakfast served from 6:00 am to 8:00 am, and an evening meal from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

16. Grocery

Juan and Maria Velez run the town grocery store, selling canned goods, fresh produce, flour, sugar, and so forth. Their children, Alicia (14), Jorge (13), and Raúl (10) like to play "cowboys" out front of the store; they may take a shine to suitably impressive investigators.

Keeper note: as an option, if one of the Velez children takes a likening to an investigator, they might follow that investigator around while in town. Later, should the investigator spend time in jail, Alicia, Jorge, and Raúl might try to help them escape by stealing a cell key. Alternatively, one of the children could secretly follow the investigators out of town (when they head to Shadow Mountain) in the hope of emulating their hero investigator—providing further drama and dilemma for the investigator concerned.

17. First Bank of Santa Rosita

Managed by Richard Monkton, a distinguished British expatriate, the bank looks after the townsfolk's finances. Since Santa Rosita is a quiet and conservative little town, there are never more than two guards on site. At any given time, the bank has (1D6+6) × \$1,000 on hand, in scrip, coin, silver, and gold. To date, no one has attempted to rob the bank.

18. Ma Richert's Restaurant

A good, respectable place to get a solid, home-cooked meal; the food for those quarantined is prepared here. Neither Ma nor her assistant cooks have any idea how the investigators' meals were poisoned, though (see **The Quarantine: Deadly Breakfast**, page 67).

19. Hurst's Tailoring

Tim Hurst is a skilled tailor, producing fine suits, shirts, and so on for a reasonable fee. A friend to all, Hurst likes to find out all about his clients while measuring them up. A few weeks ago, Hurst took sick and it must have really shaken him up, as since then, he's been relying more and more on his assistant, Mel Moody, to undertake the tailoring work.

Keeper note: the real Tim Hurst is currently bound and hidden in the cellar of his home (23) while the serpent man spy goes about impersonating the tailor. To cover for his lack of tailoring skills, the serpent man is getting Mel Moody to actually cut and stitch, while "Hurst" measures and engages in conversation with customers—allowing him to fish for information. Moody has noticed the change in his boss but has put this down to the (unnamed) illness he suffered.

20. The Green River Saloon

Owned by Hal Reynoldson, the Green River is the rowdier of Santa Rosita's two largest saloons. Much of the River's clientele consists of cowboys, ranch-hands, prospectors, drovers, and other laborers. Poker and faro are played here, and female companionship can be found for a couple of dollars. The saloon has three guest rooms available for hire.

The patrons here are more likely to pester strangers about their quarantine slips and inquire if they have been in Stillwater recently. Investigators behaving strangely, asking too many questions, or who get too uppity may find themselves in an altercation or barroom brawl—and then in jail.

21. Mayor Shaw's House

Darrell Shaw is the mayor of Santa Rosita. He owns **Santa Rosita Feed** (22) and is a partner in **Copeley's General Store** (6). The house is a grand affair, with a veranda running all the way around the building. The second story features a balcony from which Shaw can stand and look over the town. He lives alone; his wife and only child died from cholera ten years ago.

Darrell Shaw, age 57, mayor

Manipulated by Tim Hurst (the serpent man spy) through the use of domination serum, Shaw fears the epidemic of madness crossing from Stillwater to Santa Rosita and has put the quarantine order in place. Fed on a diet of Hurst's lies, Shaw spends his time worrying about diseased people getting past the checkpoints into his town. While he has heard the rumors of the walking dead, he believes these are just infected people in the last stages of illness.

As long as Hurst is able to continue coercing Shaw, the mayor can be swayed to persecute the investigators, influencing the townsfolk against them and accusing them of wrongdoing, which can lead to imprisonment or execution if the offense is serious enough.

- **Description:** a pudgy man, heavy set with a barrel-like chest.
- **Traits:** domineering and plain-spoken, expects others to do what he says.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** under the influence of Tim Hurst, who plays on the mayor's fears to draw his attention to the investigators. Should he come to see Hurst for what he really is, he will be consumed with anger at his own stupidity—the investigators could win a new ally and help channel the mayor's anger into ordering Deputy Sheriff Valentine and others to join the investigators' posse to take down the threat of the serpent people in Shadow Mountain.



Mayor Darrell Shaw

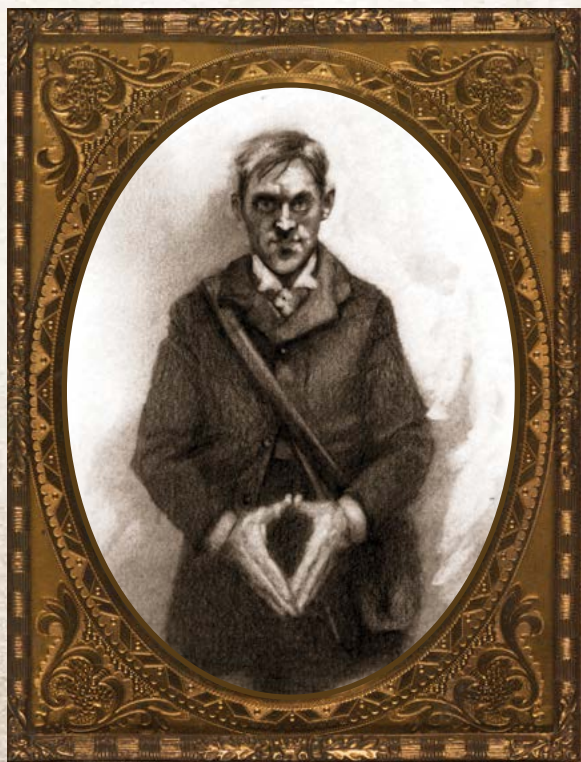
22. Santa Rosita Feed

Owned by Mayor Shaw, and managed by Howard Klein, the town's feed store provides grain and other supplies to the ranches, farms, and smallholdings in the area.

23. Tim Hurst's Home

A relatively nice home on the outskirts of town; to anyone entering, it looks wholesome and orderly, with nothing out of place.

Keeper note: if looking around the house, the master bedroom smells of reptiles, and a search of the bed finds a number of snake-like scales. A thorough search and a successful **Spot Hidden** roll discovers a locked metal box hidden in the wardrobe of the master bedroom. Inside the box are two paralysis grenades, a communication crystal, a crystal beam weapon, three doses of domination serum, and 11 doses of disguise serum (see **Chapter 1, Technological Devices of the Serpent People**, page 10). In the downstairs kitchen, a padlocked door leads to the cellar where the bound form of the real Tim Hurst is hidden—see **The Murder**, page 74, for details.



Tim Hurst,

age 30, tailor and disguised serpent person

The serpent man is in Santa Rosita to spy on the townsfolk and to distract attention away from the earth tremors caused by the serpent people in Shadow Mountain. If alerted to the danger posed by the investigators, Hurst uses his influence with the mayor to cast aspersions and frame the newcomers for various crimes.

The spy has access to a variety of serpent-designed technology, stored in the real Tim Hurst's house (see above). In addition to the supplies in the house, the spy carries the following items on his person: a surveillance (receiving) crystal, an armor crystal, and six doses of disguise serum (3 × Hurst form, 3 × various forms).

- **Description:** thin and pale, average height, with greasy hair.
- **Traits:** inquisitive and obsequious.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** wants to keep attention away from Shadow Mountain; plays up the townspeople's fear of disease and aims to nullify the threat posed by the investigators.

24. Joe McCaffrey's Home

McCaffrey is an old, retired prospector who made enough to buy a little house on the southwestern outskirts of town. He likes to sit and watch the countryside from his chair on the porch, which faces Shadow Mountain. It's unusual for McCaffrey to receive visitors, so he's suspicious of investigators calling round, although those bringing a bottle of whiskey are more likely to be greeted warmly.

Keeper note: McCaffrey has seen "little people" moving about on the summit of Shadow Mountain (see **Rumors**, page 74). His "telescope" is actually a little spyglass. Most evenings, before things get too dark, he sees people on the mountain but is not aware of anyone mining there. At the Keeper's discretion, McCaffrey may allow the investigators to look through the spyglass and see small, man-like forms crawling about the mountainside, although the lens' magnification isn't great, so not much detail can be seen.

THE PEOPLE OF SANTA ROSITA

As with the depiction of Stillwater in **Chapter 1**, there are many hundreds of residents in Santa Rosita left anonymous: merchants, laborers, clerks, spouses, children, farmers, ranchers, ranch-hands, prospectors, and so on. The Keeper should create these souls as needed, perhaps using similar characters from this book or selections from the **Sample Non-Player**

Characters in *Down Darker Trails* (page 124). Bear in mind that current circumstances make the already-close-knit people of Santa Rosita even more isolationist than usual.

The community has been stirred into a state of hysteria over the rumored outbreak of madness in Stillwater, further fomented by Tim Hurst, the disguised serpent man spy, who aims to keep fear of the madness front and center so that the locals don't have the time or the presence of mind to investigate the rumblings in the earth emanating from Shadow Mountain.

When the investigators arrive, they immediately fall under the community's suspicion for a long list of reasons: they are strangers; they have just come from Stillwater; Stillwater has been stricken by some weird plague; strangers are rumored to be the cause of all of Stillwater's troubles; and Carlos Villega, one of the quarantine guards, was poisoned while guarding the investigators. If any of the remaining reanimated dead are encountered around town, the locals' feathers are ruffled even further.

For all these reasons, the residents of Santa Rosita will be reluctant to converse with the investigators. Some may be so fearful or suspicious that they won't tell the strangers anything at all. The Keeper should call for social skill rolls to see if the investigators are able to break the ice with the locals.

- **Charm** or **Fast Talk**: suitable for conversing with physical laborers, saloon patrons, deputies, and other working-class types.
- **Persuade**: for the deputy sheriff, merchants, or town officials.
- The investigators might also be able to use other skills to ingratiate themselves with certain individuals, such as **Medicine** or **First Aid** with Doctor Martell, or **Natural World**, **Animal Handling**, or even **Ride** with hostlers and ranchers, and so on.

In summary, the investigators should have a difficult time assuaging the barely contained hysteria of the townspeople; however, working to establish relationships, good deeds, and so on, will curry favor and bring information. In particular, eventually, the investigators should learn that strange things have been going on around Shadow Mountain, which looms southwest of town.

Rumors

Investigators who succeed in getting the townspeople to talk should hear one of the rumors presented below for each successful social skill roll they make, with a suggested limit of one piece of information gained per conversation. The rumors should, ideally, be given out in the order listed, so that the investigators' suspicions will slowly be raised about Shadow Mountain.

- They got an epidemic over at Stillwater of people going crazy and clawing and hacking and shooting each other to death. And some that oughta have died, dug 'emself out of their graves and came back for revenge.
- A bunch of strangers over in Stillwater might've stirred up all this trouble. They showed up and people started going crazy, the dead started risin' from their graves, and the Apache went on the warpath.
- They say the people in Stillwater brought an Apache curse on their heads. Caused the dead to walk and seek the flesh of the living.
- Up north of town, Danny Sutton killed a couple of things he swears were human skeletons. Nothin' but bones and rags. Had to shoot 'em to pieces to drop 'em.
- Finn Bryant's boy Ray got killed in a rockslide coming through the pass south of Shadow Mountain. He and his friends were coming back from a hunting trip and half the goddamn mountain slid down on 'em.
- Mayor Shaw says the quarantine's gonna keep going until he gets somebody from the army to come over and check out Stillwater and make sure them folks is cured.
- The government is supposedly gonna send a fella out here to study all these earthquakes [not true]. Folks hereabouts think Shadow Mountain is rumbling in her guts, about to blow perhaps. They say there hasn't been a volcano in America since before the first settlers arrived.
- Joe McCaffrey says he's seen little men crawling on the summit of Shadow Mountain. In the evening, he says, he can see 'em with his telescope, squirreling around up there. He ain't even Irish, and he's seeing the Little People.

THE MURDER

On the day that the investigators leave quarantine, the serpent man spy makes another attempt to prevent their interfering with the serpent people's plans. Still masquerading as Tim Hurst, the tailor, the serpent man gives himself some minor injuries (bumps, bruises, and facial cuts) and presents himself at Valentine's office, where he claims to have been set upon and beaten by a group of strangers whose number and description matches that of the investigators. Hurst worries that this group of miscreants might be afflicted with the madness-disease from Stillwater.

A Talk with Valentine

Deputy Sheriff Valentine rounds up a posse of armed deputies and townsmen (equal to the investigators' number) and sets out to find the investigators wherever they are—probably inquiring after other strangers in town or seeking information on the earthquakes or other mysterious activity

in the area. Valentine says he wants to ask the strangers a few questions, telling them to surrender their weapons and come with him to the jail.

Presumably, the investigators see the wisdom in following Valentine's commands rather than risk a gunfight; however, if a fight erupts, the investigators must shoot their way out and escape, with the townspeople on their trail. Assuming they survive such an altercation, they become wanted fugitives in New Mexico. Use the profile of the **Quarantine Guards** for the posse members (page 87).

Valentine tells the investigators that a local resident has accused them of assault. If the investigators surrender, they are held in the jail while one of the deputies is sent to fetch Tim Hurst, so he can identify his attackers. The deputy is a long time returning, and when he eventually enters, he is considerably agitated, as he found Tim Hurst at home all right—hacked to pieces with a hatchet!

Keeper note: the serpent man spy killed the real Hurst before he visited Valentine, and then used disguise serum to assume another form, that of Montgomery Potts, a cowboy from outside of Santa Rosita. "Monty" now hangs around Main Street, watching the events unfold.

Framed!

If the investigators are not already in jail, they are arrested immediately. A lawyer or lawman investigator with the proper credentials, making a successful **Law** roll, may accompany Valentine to view the body and investigate the crime, but the others must remain in jail. Alternatively, a successful Hard **Persuade** roll allows one investigator (under guard) to view the body.

Examining Hurst's Body

Those examining Tim Hurst's beaten and hacked body, and who make a successful **Medicine** or Hard **Spot Hidden** roll, note three things:

- Hurst appears pale and emaciated, as if poorly fed, and stinks of his own waste.
- There are bruises and abrasions on Hurst's wrists and ankles, apparently indicating he had been bound.
- There are needle marks in his arm.

Keeper note: the needle marks were caused by the serpent man spy drawing blood to make the disguise serum designed to replicate Hurst's appearance.



A talk with Valentine

If no investigator makes these observations, Doctor Martell does, and shares them with Valentine, and then with the investigators once they have been released. If the investigators are able to successfully **Persuade** Valentine to discuss his suspicions, he states that Hurst looked markedly different during his earlier appearance this morning: he was beat up but did not look as pale or sick as his corpse does now.

Legal Talk

If one of the investigators is a lawyer (or similar) or has Law at 60% or above, the investigators can be freed within the day, provided they can provide Valentine with details of their whereabouts before Hurst's assault and murder took place. Once the sheriff has checked out their alibis, which (should) prove they didn't have time to accost or kill Hurst, they are released. If the investigators are unable to legally represent themselves, their freedom takes 1D4 days and a successful **Law** or **Persuade** roll to achieve.

Throughout, Deputy Sheriff Valentine is suspicious of the whole situation, believing that someone has the investigators in their sights. Of course, Valentine is far less likely to give them the benefit of the doubt (or any help) if they have acted strangely upon their arrival in Santa Rosita (trying to escape quarantine, fighting, and so on). The poisoning of Carlos Villega (and anyone else), along with Hurst's murder, seem plenty fishy to him. When Valentine finally releases the investigators, he keeps their guns, just in case.

Consequences

Investigators implicated in the murder of Tim Hurst, even when released and believed innocent by Valentine, suffer a penalty die (or increased difficulty) to any social skill rolls while in Santa Rosita for the rest of this chapter. In addition, starting the day of the murder, ask for a **Luck** roll when an investigator is in a saloon, waiting in the street, or in a store, with success meaning that they overhear people talking about the murder, and mentioning that the murdered tailor had recently become close friends with the mayor.

Keeper note: the clue about Hurst's recent friendship with the mayor might, instead, be heard while the investigators are stewing in jail, as the deputies inform them of the seriousness of their plight. The remarks about Hurst's relationship might rouse the investigators' suspicions of Mayor Shaw.

THE SPY REVEALED?

The serpent man spy in Santa Rosita has, so far, been careful in his manipulation of the townspeople; however, the arrival of the investigators has forced him to take drastic measures to bring down these meddlers. A hungry guard thwarted the poisoning attempt, while framing the investigators for murder was hasty and ill-conceived. Worse, the spy was forced to use disguise serum to assume a new persona (Montgomery "Monty" Potts)—a person unknown in Santa Rosita, and someone without a quarantine permission slip.

If the Keeper wishes, the resultant situation could lead to trouble for the serpent man spy. One of Valentine's deputies may spot Monty Potts and ask to see his quarantine slip, forcing the serpent man spy to use his Dominate spell, evade, or attack the lawman. The Keeper should fashion such an encounter as desired: the disguised serpent man and the deputy might get into a fight, provoking the spy to use his crystal beam weapon, which is seen by other witnesses. Alternatively, a passerby (or investigator) may come upon Potts crouched over a dead or unconscious deputy, clutching a hypodermic needle. Or perhaps the deputy's lifeless body is found—but the investigators have just seen the deputy walking around town.

Keeper note: while it can be presumed that the spy, being knowledgeable in the use of disguise serum, can create a new appearance by mixing a person's blood with the base serum, to do so at speed may, at the Keeper's discretion, be problematic—possibly, the serum needs to infuse for a while before use, so, if consumed immediately, the disguise may be limited in duration (lasting only an hour or so) or have detrimental effects, such as lowering the spy's hit points by 1D6.

Once exposed, the spy flees town and does not have time to collect any of his belongings stored at Tim Hurst's house—specifically, his communication crystal, leaving him without the chance for backup. Ideally, the spy makes for the Shadow Mountain lair, unless this would also lead his pursuers there. Failing this, he heads for the wilderness southeast of Santa Rosita in an attempt to draw suspicion away from the mountain. If he's lucky, he might be able to ambush his pursuers. Regardless of how this plays out, the spy does all he can to avoid being captured alive. If he makes it back to Shadow Mountain, he warns his comrades of the investigators' presence, and the complex will be ready for a possible invasion. If killed, the creature reverts to its natural form, that of a tailed, scaly skinned, and serpent-headed man-like thing. Those seeing the spy's form change from man to snake should make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss).



DOUBLE TROUBLE

If the investigators were captured in **Chapter 2**, and if any of the serpent folk escaped, the Keeper has a good excuse to cause further tribulations for the posse. The escaped serpent people could have absconded with samples of the captured investigators' blood, which they can use to create disguise serum in the investigators' likeness. Perhaps conferring with the spy already in Santa Rosita, one or more of the ophidians could use the serum to assume the forms of the investigators to commit further atrocities. The framed investigators must resort to escaping the wrath of Valentine or find a way to clear themselves by capturing or killing one of the shape-changing serpents and exposing the creature to the townsfolk.



SHADOW MOUNTAIN

Southwest of Santa Rosita, Shadow Mountain rises to a height of over 2,000 feet (607 m), part of a band of hills and mountains that form the passes between Santa Rosita, Stillwater, and other towns to the north and south. The townspeople have no reason to fear the place, which got its name when one of the early settlers in the area discovered that his farm was entirely enshrouded by the mountain's shadow when the sun began to set. The mountain has been climbed, hunted, prospected, and explored for several years without incident, as the serpent people only began working in the heart of the mountain within the past couple of years.

EXPLORING THE MOUNTAIN

On reaching Shadow Mountain, the investigators may take time to explore. Climb rolls aren't needed unless the party tries to reach the summit (see **Reaching the Summit**, page 78), although horses and other pack animals won't be able to make it anywhere near that high. Investigators making a successful Hard **Spot Hidden** roll (once per visit to the mountain) may discover one of the following small caves or tunnels that are scattered around the mountainside. In addition, those searching for footprints, tracks, and similar trails should be allowed a **Track** roll to discern the prints of men, deer, sheep, bobcats, coyotes, or rabbits, with an Extreme success detecting small, bare human-like footprints like

those found on Knife Cut Mesa (trognophides), allowing the investigators to follow the trail of the "little snakes" to **Cave Four** and into the serpent people's lair inside the mountain.

Cave One

A very small cave (SIZ 40 or less) is the den of a skunk. Anyone poking around, such as shoving a torch inside to see, should make a **Luck** roll: if successful, the investigator sees the little critter and can withdraw before it can unleash its stinky spray; if failed, the skunk sprays the victim, provoking a **CON** roll to avoid vomiting—a fumbled roll indicates temporary blindness, lasting 4D10 minutes (halved if the eyes are immediately washed out with clean water). Anyone sprayed must bathe with very strong soap or tomato juice to remove the clinging stench, and their clothes and gear will probably need to be burned or discarded—if the investigator continues unwashed into the serpent people's lair, increase the difficulty of any **Stealth** rolls (or apply a bonus die to Spot Hidden rolls made by serpent people) due to the stink they are carrying around.

Cave Two

This cave is the lair of a bobcat. Those approaching may attempt a **Track**, **Natural World**, or **Science (Zoology)** roll to recognize the tracks of the bobcat, and that such creatures can be fierce fighters if cornered. Wise investigators leave the cantankerous 'cat alone, but, if it is disturbed, it only attacks until it is wounded, and then flees to safety. The bobcat's profile can be found on page 89.

Cave Three

A large cave extends into the mountain for 11 yards/meters, narrowing at the far end where the skeletal remains of a lost prospector, dead for many years, can be found. The dusty corpse's clothes are in rags, his boots have rotted, and a knife and (cap-and-ball) revolver lie corroded. Careful examination or a successful **Spot Hidden** roll discovers arrows broken off in the corpse's shoulder and belly. Searching the body finds a large rotted leather pouch containing \$116 worth of silver nuggets. If the Keeper wishes, the corpse may re-animate while it is being searched, or as its looters leave the cave—one of the last of the dead to be activated by a fluke effect of the serpent people's virus. Select one of **Risen Dead: Skeletal** from **Chapter 1**, page 34.

Cave Four

A successful **Track** roll outside of this cave picks up the prints of many small, bare feet, identical to those of the "little snakes" (trognophides) found on Knife Cut Mesa. The cave leads to a rough-hewn tunnel, which gradually ascends into the mountainside, meeting up with the tunnel

connecting **The Entrance** (nearby) to the **Barracks** (page 80). 1D4 trognophides loiter here; use the profiles in **Chapter 2**, page 60.

REACHING THE SUMMIT

Shadow Mountain is neither the largest nor the smallest of these mountains, and most of its lower reaches are a fairly easy climb, marked here and there by game trails and other paths used by hunters and prospectors. About two-thirds of the way up the mountain, the going gets steeper, requiring a successful **Climb** roll when the trails run out. Those using rope to secure themselves from falling should be safe from serious injury, although a fumble or pushed roll failure could mean the rope breaks; otherwise, the route they have taken is impassable and they must waste time finding another way up. Investigators risking damage from falling lose 1D6 damage per 10 feet (3 m) climbed: roll 1D4 × 10 to determine the distance climbed before the fall (thus, a roll of 2 denotes 2D6 fall damage). Kindly Keepers may allow a successful **Jump** roll to halve fall damage, with an Extreme success indicating the investigator has managed to grab a rock and is clinging to the mountainside, able to then secure themselves and attempt another **Climb** roll to reach the summit.

Those who reach the summit of Shadow Mountain and look down around the mountain, scanning for entranceways, can attempt a **Spot Hidden** roll to notice a cave mouth on the southwestern side, approximately half way up. Descending to the cave mouth is relatively easy (no roll) and takes the investigators to **The Entrance** (nearby) into the heart of the mountain.

If searching around the summit for an entrance, a Hard **Spot Hidden** roll detects a clump of tall stones and brush, which conceals another route into the mountain—a passage leading to the stone ledge above the **Virus Holding and Dispersal Chamber** (page 82).

Keeper note: 1D3 trognophides may be guarding either of the two entrances described above; use the profiles in **Chapter 2**, page 60.

THE SERPENT'S COMPLEX

The complex inside Shadow Mountain was created in part by the burrowing horrors engineered by the serpent people. The burrowers were directed to create tunnels ascending all the way to the summit, with the serpent people then using the trognophides to carve out living chambers, laboratories, and connecting passages to create the complex. Once their quarters were completed, the serpent people turned the

burrowing horrors' attention to mining deep into the Earth's crust, allowing magma to rise toward the spiraling shafts they had created within the mountain: an artificially created volcano. As a result, the entire complex is warm and humid, especially in the lower tunnels.

Most of the passages in the complex are large, winding tunnels approximately 20 feet (6 m) in diameter. A successful **Science (Geology)** roll reveals that the tunnels were artificially created, but the smoothness of the walls defies comparison with any known earthly mining techniques; a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll recalls debatable suggestions and rumors concerning unnamed monstrous things that burrow and delve beneath the earth.

The following description of the complex is given in ascending order, from the main entrance in the mountainside up to the summit. Note that several passages descend from the **Barracks** (page 80) into the bowels of the mountain, spiraling deep into the Earth, where the burrowing horrors await further instructions from the serpent people. If the investigators travel down these lower passages (a journey taking several hours), they find that the tunnels cross and re-cross each other, creating a maze all the way through the mountain, from top to bottom. The deeper they go, the fouler the stench, and the walls and floors become slick with stinking slime. No rooms or chambers are encountered, but if the intruders delve deep enough, a successful **Listen** roll discerns low, guttural sounds coming from somewhere below.

A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll suggests that these tunnels were created by whatever lumbering horrors lie far beneath the mountain. If the investigators foolishly continue downward, they may find the way blocked by an enormous fleshy wall (a burrowing horror), provoking a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss). The burrower remains (mostly) motionless and won't take any action unless it is attacked, in which case it suddenly moves and turns around to ruthlessly wipe out its tormentors, requiring another **Sanity** roll for seeing its full horror (1D3/1D10 loss)—see the **Burrowing Horrors** profiles on page 90. Other passages may be used to flee the burrowing horror, but, in the end, all that can be found in these depths are more burrowing horrors (with the resultant Sanity loss).

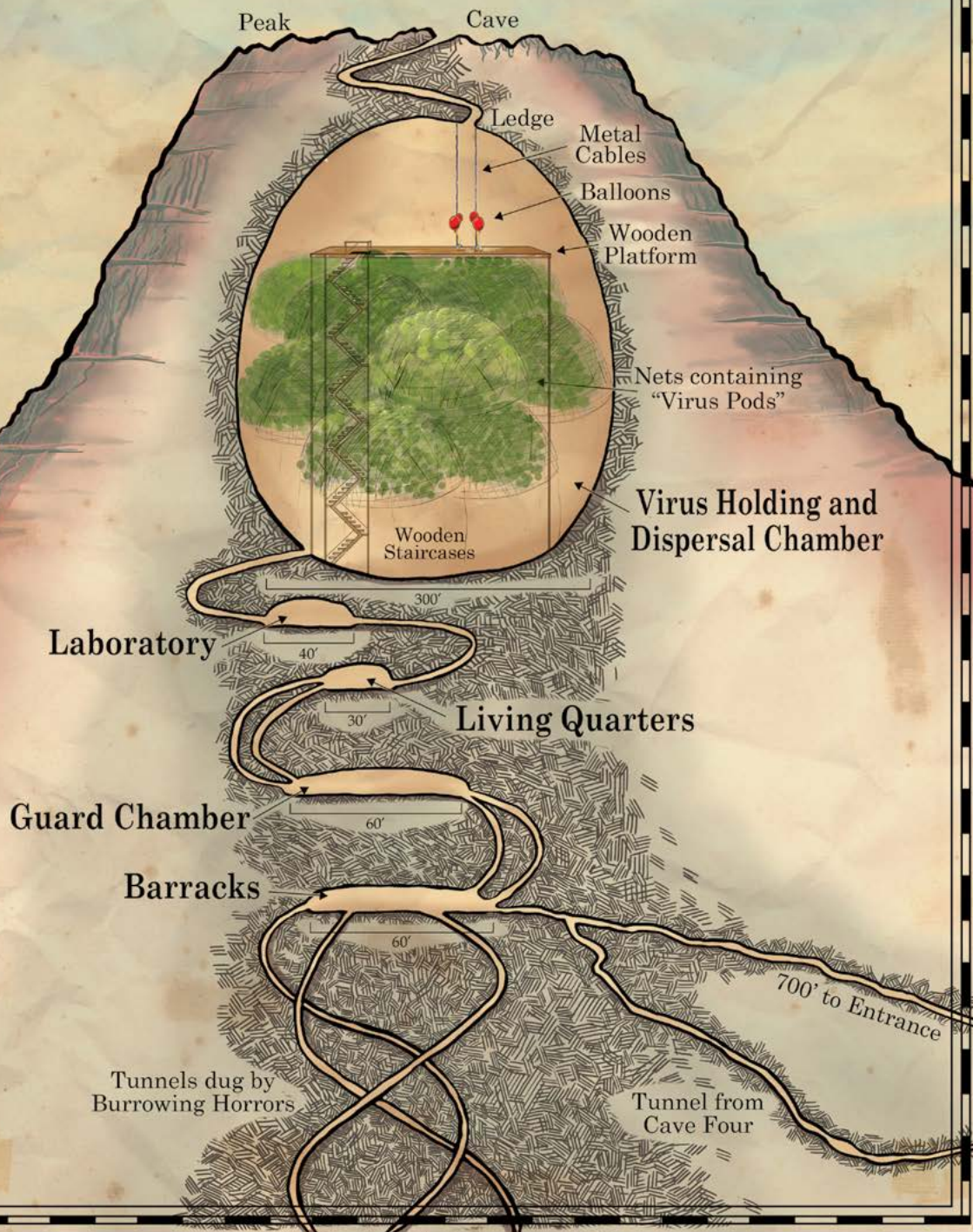
The Entrance

The main entrance into the Shadow Mountain complex is a 5 foot (1.5 m) high, roughly hewn tunnel, over halfway up the southwestern face of the mountain. After a while, the tunnel widens and the walls become much smoother. The tunnel climbs gently upward for another 600 feet (183 m) before it opens into the **Barracks** (page 80), where the trognophides reside.

Keeper Map

SHADOW MOUNTAIN

Profile View



Map Representative Only - Not to Scale

Keeper Map

Shadow Mountain map

If the investigators are not being stealthy and are using some form of light source as they make their way into the mountain, there is a 50% chance that the trognophides see them coming and send a force of 1D4+3 of their number to deal with the intruders, while others scurry off to inform their masters of the intrusion; within a few minutes, the entire complex is alerted.

THE SERPENT PEOPLE IN THE MOUNTAIN

There are only two serpent people in the Shadow Mountain complex, who are assisted by the trognophides and their former leader, an ancient creature known as one of the “Chosen of Yig,” a massive serpent with human-like arms. The two serpent people wear similar tunics to those worn by their brethren in the lair overlooking Stillwater and are similarly armed—their profiles can be found on page 90.

- **Serpent Person #6:** a geologist/technician, who supervises the Shadow Mountain complex. She wears a tan tunic and carries a crystal beam weapon and a communication crystal.
- **Serpent Person #7:** a technician/warrior, dressed in a tan tunic and carrying a crystal beam weapon, two paralysis grenades, and a communication crystal (with which it stays in touch with Serpent Person #6).
- **Chosen of Yig:** an enormous serpent with a humanoid torso and arms, it wears no clothing but is armed with a huge, obsidian-bladed sword, which takes both of its hands to wield. This creature was once the leader of the trognophides in this region and is more intelligent, stronger, and larger than its kin.

In addition, any serpent people who escaped the investigators in the lair north of Stillwater have fled to Shadow Mountain. Having previously encountered the investigators, such serpent people can identify them as significant threats that must be dealt with ruthlessly—capture is not an option. The Shadow Mountain experiment is crucial to starting the process to destroy mankind and raise up the serpent people. As such, the serpent people will do everything in their power to see their plan succeed—even if it means their own deaths. However, if all seems hopeless they are smart enough to flee, allowing them to start again elsewhere.

Barracks

This rough-walled cave is approximately 60 feet (18 m) across and only 7 feet (2 m) high. The place stinks; the floor is a mess of dried brush and grass, gnawed bones, countless scraps of shed snakeskin, and foul excrement. Apart from the entrance passage, there are five other tunnels exiting the chamber: two ascend to the **Guard Chamber** (nearby), three descend into the tunnels where the burrowing horrors lurk.

Within the chamber, amid the detritus, are more trognophides. Currently, there are 18 of these creatures in the complex (use the profiles provided at the end of **Chapter 2**, page 60); most are the dwarfish, half-human, half-ophidian things, but a few are little more than large snakes, some with stunted limbs. The Keeper should decide where these creatures are when the investigators enter the complex, remembering that 1D4+3 are sent to **The Entrance** to investigate if intruders are detected, while a few others slink off to warn the serpent people elsewhere in the complex. The trognophides attack intruders with crude weapons and venomous bites but flee if more than half their number are slain.

Guard Chamber

This large, smooth-walled chamber is 60 feet (18 m) across and about 15 feet (4.5 m) high. In the center is a large “nest” of brush and dried grass, surrounded by thousands of splintered bones which lie scattered across the floor. Two large, smooth-walled passages twist upward from this chamber to the **Living Quarters** (following), while two more connect to the **Barracks** below.

This is the “guard post” of the Chosen of Yig (see **The Serpent People in the Mountain**, nearby), who rises up to defend the complex when the investigators enter. The creature’s lower body is that of a gigantic snake, some 20 feet (6 m) long, while its upper torso, arms, and head are those of a well-muscled humanoid.

For centuries, the Chosen of Yig commanded the trognophides in this region, until it was supplanted by the reawakening of the millennia-old serpent people. Now, it serves and guards its masters. Any humans entering its chamber are attacked, and any fleeing trognophides rally here behind their former chief.

Keeper note: if the investigators don’t pursue the trognophides into the mountain from **The Entrance**, the Chosen of Yig leads his lesser kin to them. The trognophides do not flee while the Chosen of Yig lives, but if it dies they will try to escape from the complex.



Living Quarters

Another smooth-walled chamber, 30 feet (9 m) across and a little over 10 feet (3 m) high, with a single large, smooth-sided tunnel ascending to the **Laboratory** (following), and two similar passages leading back to the **Guard Chamber**.

On entry, two small nests of grass and dried plants can be seen at one side of the room. Nearby, small boulders have been set up to serve as crude tables and chairs. A few of the plate- and palm-sized etched metal triangles (which may have already been identified as the books of serpent people) can be found in this chamber—if they could be deciphered, these deal with subjects including geology and genetic manipulation. These are the living quarters of the two serpent people in charge of the Shadow Mountain complex.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices some wooden boxes, which contain 6 × crystal beam weapons, 2 × armor crystals, 4 × communication crystals, 6 × explosive grenades, and 8 × paralysis grenades.

Keeper note: if the base is caught by surprise, Serpent Person #7 is encountered here. If they escaped the investigators, Serpent Persons #2 to #5 from the Stillwater lair could also be here (if the intrusion of the investigators has gone undetected). If the investigators have been detected, all of the serpent people arm themselves with crystal beam weapons and attempt to hold off the intruders. If half the serpent people are slain or incapacitated, the rest retreat to the **Laboratory** (following), so as to escape through the Virus Holding and Dispersal Chamber and out to the mountain's peak.

Laboratory

This oval-shaped chamber is 40 feet (12 m) across and just over 10 feet (3 m) high. A single large passage winds steeply upward and leads to the **Virus Holding and Dispersal Chamber** (following).

Inside, a large stone table and two desks are set against a wall, on which are a series of metal plates. If examined, the plates are marked (scratched) with a series of sketches depicting a cone-like shape with lines and markings within it—a successful **INT** roll realizes that these are diagrams of the Shadow Mountain complex. There are strange squiggles (notations in the serpent people's language) on the sketches. One diagram shows a much smaller version of the mountain with far more detail given to the spaces beneath it—a successful **Science (Geology)** roll surmises that the lines indicate extensive excavations far beneath the mountain. There are several etched triangular metal plates on the tables and desks (serpent people books) covering topics on geology and meteorology.

Keeper note: Serpent Person #6 is normally found here, studying and making any necessary alterations to the “grand scheme.” If Serpent Person #1 from the Stillwater lair escaped, he is also found here. If the investigators infiltrate this far into the complex, the serpent people here attempt to escape through **The Peak**.

Virus Holding and Dispersal Chamber

The tunnel curves upward to the base of a massive, rough-walled, egg-shaped chamber, some 300 feet (91 m) across at the base and over 100 feet (30 m) high. About 60 feet (18 m) above the floor is a wooden platform, anchored to the walls and supported from below by stout wooden posts. A series of wooden stairs switch back and forth as they climb from the floor to the platform above. Enormous nets hang below the platform, filled with hundreds of “bubbles”—transparent globes or balloons, each approximately 24 inches (61 cm) in diameter, composed of some unknown, apparently very lightweight substance.

Keeper note: the “bubbles” are actually containers holding millions of doses of the diabolical viruses, destined to make drooling apes of humans while restoring some spark of intellect to the trognophides. Should any of the bubbles become damaged, the virus is released, potentially exposing anyone in the chamber—see **The Improved Virus box**, nearby.

The wooden platform lies 40 feet (12 m) below the chamber's ceiling. Two thick rope-cables hang from the ceiling to the platform, fastened to metal rings—a successful **Spot Hidden** roll notes that these are similarly attached to the ceiling, next to a ledge. Four floating balloons, each 4 feet (1 m) in diameter, are also moored to the rings holding the cables to the platform. Dangling beneath each of these large balloons is a 6-foot (1.8 m) rope with a looped end.

Keeper note: the four large balloons are filled with helium gas and are positioned to act as an emergency escape route—the user grabs the rope loop, puts a foot into the loop and unties the balloon from its mooring ring, and using the cable as a guide, rises up to the ledge on the ceiling. The ledge connects to a passage climbing up to the mountain's summit (see **Mountaintop Escape**, following). Each balloon can support up to SIZ 75. The fixed cables can also be used to ascend to the ledge with a successful **Climb** roll; a pushed failure may result in a fall onto the wooden platform—roll 1D4 × 10 feet (3 m) to determine distance climbed before falling, with 1D6 damage per 10 feet (3 m) climbed, halved with a successful **Jump** roll. If a falling climber states they are trying to avoid landing on the wooden platform and, instead, aiming to fall into the balloon-filled nets, a successful **Jump** roll allows them to do so and negate any fall damage; however, this definitely

ruptures several of the virus-filled balloons, exposing those still in the chamber to the effects of the virus.

Investigator Escape

Investigators escaping from the complex find the guide cables are attached to a narrow ledge at the top of the chamber, which leads to a passage into the mountain. Following the passage takes the investigators out through a concealed exit to the mountain's peak.

Serpent People Escape

If the serpent people are forced to flee using the helium-filled balloons, they can use their crystal beam weapons to shoot at pursuers, shoot the other balloons, or shoot into the virus containers, as the Keeper desires.



THE IMPROVED VIRUS

This improved version of the virus requires those within the confined space of the chamber to make a successful **Hard CON** roll or immediately suffer the loss of $1D4+1 \times 5$ points of INT, EDU, and POW (roll for each characteristic) and 1D6 Sanity points. If the CON roll is fumbled, the losses are at maximum. If the CON roll is successful, the losses are reduced to $1D2 \times 5$ points of INT, EDU, and POW, and 1D4 Sanity. Note that unlike the virus' earlier form, these losses are permanent unless an antidote is somehow devised. In addition, refer to **Effects of the Virus** (Chapter 1, page 26) for the virus' other effects, which also become permanent.

If the virus is released outside of the mountain, the CON roll is made at Regular difficulty. Again, all losses caused by this improved version of the virus are permanent and begin to take effect 1D6+10 hours after exposure.



Mountaintop Escape

If chasing fleeing serpent people, the investigators probably exit the mountain via the passage leading to the summit, which may lead to a last mountaintop battle with any surviving serpent people. In such an event, the serpent people's intention is to escape, rather than destroy the investigators, so knockouts and wounding are favored to ensure the investigators cannot or do not pursue. Of course, sharp-shooting heroes may just let the serpents run and aim to pick them off with a few well-placed shots.

THE DOOM THAT CAME TO SANTA ROSITA

The progress of the serpent people's plans means that the investigators have only a few days (at the Keeper's discretion) before the serpent people move to bring their explosive plan into fruition—directing the burrowing horrors to carve through the Earth's crust and bring magma seeping upward through the mountain. The eruption unleashes the virus into the atmosphere, spreading it on the wind, and dooming New Mexico Territory.

When ready to act, Serpent Person #6 descends to the tunnels beneath the **Barracks** and directs the burrowing horrors to dig deep. Over the next eight hours, the number and severity of earth tremors in and around Santa Rosita increase considerably. The serpent people, followed by the trognophides, abandon the complex inside Shadow Mountain. The trognophides, led by the Chosen of Yig, are then directed to take up locations around the base of the mountain to guard against any last-minute intrusions.

If the investigators are unable to stop the formation of the volcano, their next cue to act could come if they are watching Shadow Mountain, perhaps sitting with **Joe McCaffrey** (page 73) and using his spyglass to observe the mountain from a distance. Watchers may see the serpent people on the summit performing a spell to summon and bind a shantak to carry them to safety. The spell takes 50 minutes to cast, and the great, dragon-like shantak arrives some 15 minutes later (see **Shantak**, page 306, *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*). The serpent people climb aboard and fly off, satisfied that their plan will succeed.

For the next few hours the tremors grow in severity, and then smoke begins to pour from the summit of Shadow Mountain. After spewing smoke and ash for several hours, the mountain finally blows its top, sending fire and ash raining down on Santa Rosita and the surrounding countryside. Tendrils of lava ooze down the slopes, eventually reaching the town. The virus is released, bringing doom to all humans in a 100-mile (161 km) radius.

DISRUPTING THE PLAN

It is possible for a bunch of brave investigators to disrupt the serpent people's scheme. Some possibilities follow, depending on what the investigators have gleaned of the diabolical plan and their resolve to be rid of the serpent menace. In all cases, the Keeper should allow the investigators at least one chance to save the day, and reward cunning and ingenuity accordingly.

- Simply killing off all of the serpent people prevents the eruption, as the burrowing horrors lie dormant until commanded by a serpent person. Of course, the virus-filled containers (unless destroyed) remain in situ, waiting for the day some unwitting fool finds them.
- If enough explosives—say, four cases of dynamite, strategically placed—are successfully detonated within the **Barracks** or in the tunnels below, the upper passages and chambers can be collapsed, destroying the complex and the virus-laden capsules. In such an event, the virus seeps into the earth and eventually dissipates, no longer a threat to humanity.
- Assuming the eruption does not take place (if the concealed opening at the summit was sealed off), burning or detonating the virus containers in the holding chamber would (eventually) eliminate the virus; however, if the eruption is allowed to happen, the explosion tears through the mountaintop, forcing the virus to escape.
- Using science, perhaps with the aid of **Doctor Henry Fletcher** (Chapter 1, page 18), the investigators may be able to create an antidote to the virus, or a means to destroy or render it harmless. At the Keeper's discretion, a combined Extreme **Science (Biology)** and (**Chemistry** or **Pharmacy**) roll might do the trick, likewise combining one of these sciences with a **Cthulhu Mythos** roll could work. If playing *Pulp Cthulhu*, reduce any difficulties to Hard or Regular, depending on the circumstances.
- Those possessing magic may destroy the virus with a spell, such as Call Cthugha bringing the alien god to burn the virus into nothingness—although the side effects of such a summoning may cause some additional problems! Alternatively, a spell that affects the weather could steer the virus-filled air away to a relatively unpopulated area to reduce its effect, or spontaneous use of **Cthulhu Mythos** could conjure an effect to destroy the virus or move it elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

Perhaps the investigators prevent the eruption or somehow minimize the threat of the virus. Even if the virus is destroyed, allowing the eruption to take place still dooms Santa Rosita to a fiery doom. Did any of the serpent people escape, enabling them to recreate the plan elsewhere in the years to follow?

The Keeper should grant the following rewards, as well as a development phase for surviving investigators.

- Understanding the serpent people's plan: +1 Sanity point.
- Stopping the dispersal of the virus: +1D6 Sanity points.
- Somehow moving the virus to an unpopulated area: +2 Sanity points.
- Stopping the eruption of Shadow Mountain (saving Santa Rosita): +1D4 Sanity points.
- Unmasking Tim Hurst as a serpent man spy to the people of Santa Rosita: +1 Sanity point.
- Killing serpent people: +1D6 Sanity points, to a maximum of 6 points.
- Allowing any serpent people to escape: -1D6 Sanity points.
- Killing the Chosen of Yig: +2D4 Sanity points.
- Killing trognophides: +1 Sanity point per serpent kin slain, to a maximum of 6 points.
- Killing or scaring off a shantak: +1D6 Sanity points.
- Killing a burrowing horror: +1D10 Sanity points.

If the investigators fail to thwart the schemes of the serpent people, the penalties should be considerable. If the volcano erupts and spreads the virus into the skies, not only do they suffer the effects of the virus, but each surviving investigator also loses 1D10 Sanity points, as over the next few weeks and months they witness the debilitating effects of the virus on the residents of New Mexico Territory. If the virus was contained or destroyed within the mountain but the eruption couldn't be stopped, the Sanity loss is 1D6 points, since it is likely to cause major destruction in the Santa Rosita area.

Finally, there may be other repercussions from the investigators' actions within this adventure. Did they wear out their welcome in Santa Rosita or did they acquit themselves by saving the town? Did their suspicions lead them to take drastic actions that could come back to haunt them? Did they make sure the virus containers were destroyed? These questions might require answers in the future. Some deeper, more far-reaching follow-up adventure possibilities are outlined in the **Follow-Up Adventures** section on page 91.

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

Characters are grouped by association; note that some include a Luck value and pulp talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games, which can be ignored for *Call of Cthulhu*.

CABIN COMPANIONS

Claude Kinsey, age 37, gambler

STR 55 CON 60 SIZ 65 DEX 75 INT 75
APP 65 POW 60 EDU 70 SAN 60 HP 12
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3
.36 Colt Police revolver 65% (32/13), damage 1D10
.41 Remington 2-shot derringer 65% (32/13), damage 1D10+1
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Accounting 60%, Charm 60%, Fast Talk 55%, Gambling 75%, History 40%, Jump 40%, Language (English) 65%, Language (Spanish) 20%, Law 30%, Listen 50%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 60%, Ride 40%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 40%, Throw 40%.

Judge Rupert Hill, age 55, circuit judge

STR 50 CON 50 SIZ 70 DEX 50 INT 75
APP 50 POW 65 EDU 90 SAN 65 HP 12
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 5 MP: 13

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3
Walking cane 40% (20/8), damage 1D6
.31 Colt Pocket revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D8
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Accounting 30%, Credit Rating 65%, Gambling 45%, Intimidate 45%, Language (English) 75%, Language (Latin) 50%, Law 75%, Library Use 55%, Persuade 75%, Psychology 55%, Ride 40%, Science (Biology) 25%, Stealth 35%, Throw 50%.

Matt McCoy, age 42, cattle buyer

STR 65 CON 70 SIZ 75 DEX 60 INT 70
APP 60 POW 60 EDU 65 SAN 60 HP 14
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4
.45 Colt revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D10+2
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting 55%, Credit Rating 55%, Fast Talk 40%, Language (English) 60%, Language (Spanish) 30%, Law 30%, Natural World 70%, Persuade 40%, Ride 55%, Rope Use 50%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 40%, Throw 55%.

Johnny Crabaugh, age 22, drifter

STR 65 CON 70 SIZ 65 DEX 70 INT 60
APP 45 POW 55 EDU 50 SAN 55 HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 75% (37/15), damage 1D3+1D4
.45 Peacemaker revolver 45% (22/9), damage 1D10+2
Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills

Fast Talk 50%, Intimidate 35%, Jump 50%, Language (English) 50%, Language (Spanish) 25%, Listen 45%, Natural World 60%, Navigate 35%, Ride 70%, Rope Use 60%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 50%, Throw 45%, Track 35%.

SANTA ROSITA

Mayor Darrell Shaw, age 57, community leader

STR 55 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 55 INT 75
APP 50 POW 65 EDU 75 SAN 65 HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 5 MP: 13

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
.36 Colt Police revolver 30% (15/6), damage 1D10
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting 45%, Charm 40%, Credit Rating 70%, Fast Talk 45%, Intimidate 40%, Language (English) 65%, Law 40%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 35%.

Deputy Sheriff Wayne Valentine, age 41, the law

STR 70 CON 70 SIZ 75 DEX 65 INT 70
APP 65 POW 60 EDU 65 SAN 60 HP 14
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4
.45 Peacemaker revolver 70% (35/14), damage 1D10+2
12-gauge shotgun (DB) 45% (22/9), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Climb 50%, Credit Rating 55%, Intimidate 45%, Jump 40%, Language (English) 45%, Language (Spanish) 20%, Law 55%, Navigate 35%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 45%, Ride 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 45%, Track 35%.

Doctor Pete Martell, age 51, general practitioner

STR 55 CON 65 SIZ 70 DEX 60 INT 75
APP 70 POW 60 EDU 85 SAN 58 HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 5 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3+1D4
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Credit Rating 55%, First Aid 75%, History 50%, Language (English) 75%, Language (Latin) 40%, Language (Spanish) 25%, Library Use 45%, Medicine 50%, Natural World 40%, Persuade 40%, Psychoanalysis 20%, Psychology 35%, Ride 35%, Science (Biology) 40%, Science (Pharmacy) 45%, Spot Hidden 35%, Stealth 30%.

Tim Hurst, age 30, tailor, and disguised serpent person

STR 60 CON 55 SIZ 60 DEX 75 INT 85
APP (55)* POW 75 EDU (60)* SAN — HP 11
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 15 Luck: 40

*Human disguise.

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (weapon or unarmed if humanoid, or weapon, bite, or claw if serpentine)

Poison: in serpent form, the bite is highly venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D8 damage.

Devices: Hurst carries a surveillance (receiving) crystal, an armor crystal, and 6 doses of disguise serum (3 × Hurst form, 3 × various forms)—see **Chapter 1, Technological Devices of the Serpent People**, page 10. These are in addition to the cache of devices he keeps hidden in **Tim Hurst's Home** (page 23).

Fighting 40% (20/8), damage 1D3
Bite 35% (17/7), damage 1D8+poison
.36 Colt Police revolver 35% (17/7), damage 1D10
Beam weapon crystal 50% (25/10), damage 1D8
Paralysis grenade 40% (20/8), stunned for 1D10+5 rounds (negated with Extreme CON roll)
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Credit Rating 45%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, Fast Talk 35%, History 30%, Language (English) 55%, Language (Naacal) 85%, Listen 45%, Mechanical Repair 45%, Medicine 30%, Natural World 50%, Science (Biology) 20%, Science (Chemistry) 30%, Science (Geology) 30%, Science (Pharmacy) 35%, Stealth 65%, Spot Hidden 55%, Throw 50%.

Armor: 1-point scales; armor crystal providing 10-point armor for 5 rounds.

Spells: Cloud Memory, Enthrall Victim.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see Tim Hurst's true serpent form.

QUARANTINE GUARDS

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	60	55	50	50	45	70	70	60	60	70
CON	65	60	60	55	50	60	75	65	70	60
SIZ	60	65	65	65	70	75	65	65	70	75
DEX	55	50	60	60	60	55	70	60	55	75
INT	60	65	65	55	60	70	65	55	60	60
POW	55	45	60	60	60	55	50	50	45	55
APP	55	50	35	45	50	55	65	55	60	50
EDU	55	50	60	60	55	65	65	50	60	60
SAN	55	45	60	60	60	55	50	50	45	55
HP	12	12	12	12	12	13	14	13	14	13
DB	0	0	0	0	0	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4
Build	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Move	8	7	7	7	7	7	9	7	7	8
MP	11	9	12	12	12	11	10	10	9	11

Combat

Brawl 65% (32/13), damage 1D3+DB or knife 1D4+DB
 .44-40 '73 rifle/carbine* 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
 .45 Peacemaker revolver* 45% (22/9), damage 1D10+2
 12-g shotgun (DB)* 45% (22/9), damage 4D6/2D6/1D3
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

*#1-#5 each carry a .44-40 '73 rifle/carbine, #6-#8 each carry a .45 Peacemaker revolver, and #9-#10 each carry a 12-g shotgun (DB).

Skills

Climb 65%, First Aid 45%, Intimidate 55%, Jump 50%, Language (English) 10%, Language (Chiricahua Apache Dialect) 60%, Listen 50%, Natural World 60%, Navigate 60%, Occult 20%, Ride 50%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 70%, Throw 45%, Track 70%, Trap 60%.

MISCELLANEOUS TOWNSPEOPLE OF SANTA ROSITA

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	50	55	50	65	70	40	45	55	60	80
CON	60	70	60	65	50	55	70	55	45	60
SIZ	65	60	70	50	50	45	65	60	60	70
DEX	60	55	50	70	60	45	60	55	70	50
INT	60	65	55	60	55	65	60	55	65	50
POW	50	40	55	60	45	50	55	45	50	40
APP	65	55	45	60	45	40	60	65	55	60
EDU	60	60	65	55	50	55	60	70	60	55
SAN	50	40	55	60	45	50	55	45	50	40
HP	12	13	13	11	10	10	13	11	10	13
DB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+1D4
Build	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Move	7	7	7	9	9	8	7	7	8	8
MP	10	8	11	12	9	10	11	9	10	8

Combat

Brawl 45% (22/9), damage 1D3+DB
 .36 Colt Navy revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D10
 16-gauge shotgun (DB) 40% (20/8), damage
 2D6+2/1D6+1/1D4
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting 40%, Persuade 40%, Psychology 30%,
 Language (English) 50%.

*#2-#4 each carry a .36 Colt Navy revolver, #8-#9 each carry a
 16-gauge shotgun (DB).

COUNTRYSIDE

Bobcat, ornery critter

STR 45 CON 60 SIZ 20 DEX 95 POW 40
DB: -1 Build: -1 Move: 10 HP 8

Combat

Attacks per Round: 2 (bite, claw)

Rake: if both claws successfully hit, the hind legs may rake for an extra (free) attack.

Fighting 50% (25/10), damage 1D6-1
Rake 70% (35/14), damage 2D3-1

Skills

Climb 80%, Stealth 80%.

SHADOW MOUNTAIN

Serpent Person #6, geologist/technician

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 60 INT 95
APP — POW 70 EDU — SAN — HP 12
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 14

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (weapon, bite, claw)

Poison: bite is venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D8 damage.

Fighting 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Bite 30% (15/6), damage 1D8+poison
Beam weapon crystal 45% (22/9), damage 1D8
Paralysis grenade 35% (17/7), stunned for 1D10+5 rounds (negated with Extreme CON roll)
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Climb 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, Electrical Repair 40%, History 30%, Language (English) 10%, Language (Naacal) 80%, Listen 35%, Mechanical Repair 80%, Natural World 20%, Science (Chemistry) 70%, Science (Geology) 80%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 40%, Throw 35%.

Armor: 1-point scales; armor crystal providing 10-point armor for 5 rounds.

Spells: Chant of Thoth, Contact Yig, Summon/Bind Shantak, Wrack.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a serpent person.

Serpent Person #7, technician/warrior

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 65 DEX 70 INT 90
APP — POW 60 EDU — SAN — HP 12
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 12

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (weapon, bite, claw)

Poison: bite is venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D8 damage.

Fighting 45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
Bite 30% (15/6), damage 1D8+poison
Beam weapon crystal 50% (25/10), damage 1D8
Paralysis grenade 30% (15/6), stunned for 1D10+5 rounds (negated with Extreme CON roll)
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Climb 45%, Cthulhu Mythos 30%, Electrical Repair 60%, History 35%, Language (English) 15%, Language (Naacal) 75%, Listen 40%, Mechanical Repair 70%, Medicine 55%, Natural World 40%, Science (Chemistry) 40%, Science (Geology) 60%, Science (Pharmacy) 20%, Spot Hidden 44%, Stealth 55%, Throw 30%.

Armor: 1-point scales; armor crystal providing 10-point armor for 5 rounds.

Spells: Contact Yig, Shrivelling, Summon/Bind Child of Yig, Summon/Bind Shantak.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a serpent person.

Chosen of Yig, serpent-bodied warrior

STR 130 CON 120 SIZ 140 DEX 90 INT 55
 APP — POW 60 EDU — SAN — HP 26
 DB: +2D6 Build: 3 Move: 8 MP: 12 Luck: 30

Combat

Attacks per Round: 2 (weapon and bite or tail bash)

Poison: bite is venomous; victim must succeed in an Extreme CON roll or suffer 1D6 damage.

Fighting	30% (15/6), damage 1D6+2D6
Bite	40% (20/8), damage 1D6+poison
Great sword	50% (25/10), damage 1D8+2+2D6
Tail bash	35% (17/7), damage 2D6
Dodge	45% (22/9)

Skills

Listen 40%, Scent Prey 45%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 60%, Throw 60%.

Armor: 3-point scales.

Spells: none.

Sanity loss: 2/2D4 Sanity points to see the chosen of Yig.

Burrowing Horrors, subterranean labor force

Immense, fleshy worm-like snakes, the result of genetic engineering upon the trognophides; some have vestigial limbs or feelers, others have thick hide instead of scales, while all have incredibly strong teeth and bullet-shaped heads used to tunnel through rock.

Use this profile for all burrowing horrors.

STR 250 CON 225 SIZ 300 DEX 20 INT 25
 APP — POW 70 EDU — SAN — HP 52
 DB: +6D6 Build: 7 Move: 6/1* MP: 14

*Burrowing.

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (bite or crush)

Fighting	50% (25/10), damage 6D6
Bite	35% (17/7), damage 6D6
Dodge	10% (5/2)

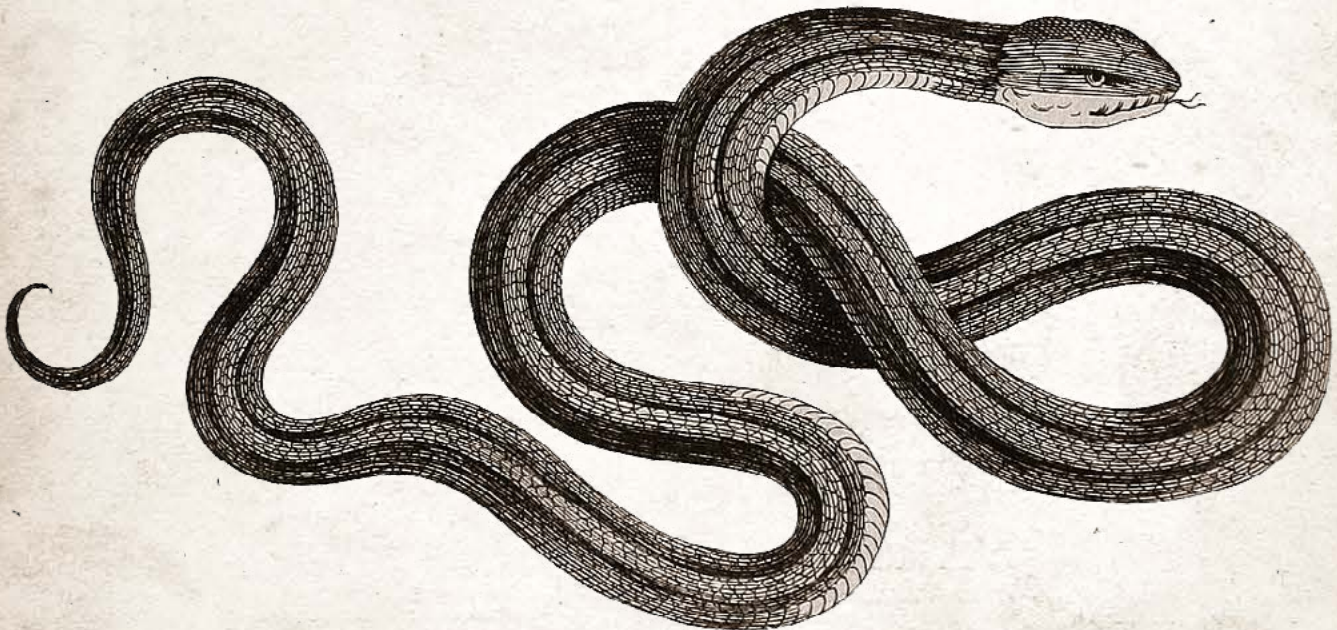
Skills

Burrow 90%.

Armor: 5-point hide or scale.

Spells: none.

Sanity loss: 1D3/1D8+2 Sanity points to see a burrowing horror.



CAMPAIGN APPENDIX: FOLLOW-UP ADVENTURES

While *Shattered Earth, Poisoned Sky* ends this campaign, the Keeper may wish to create other adventures following up on the characters, creatures, or events from *The Shadow Over Stillwater*.

If Hank Hanratty was captured alive in **Chapter 1**, the investigators may still need to return him to their hometown for trial. If so, Hank's sister June and her family may try to free him, or, if Hank was killed, they may seek vengeance on the investigators—they may even hire a few gunmen to help settle the score.

The investigators may have other interactions and relationships to consider before leaving Stillwater for good. Does Doc Fletcher need help treating folks for the effects of the virus, or finishing his anti-zombie medicine? Does Reverend Boone harbor any grudges against the investigators? Does Marshal Whitman need help restoring order and normalcy to the town? Can the investigators arrange some sort of truce between Taza's Chiricahua Apache and the town? Does Taza seek the investigators' aid against some new foe, supernatural or otherwise? Or do the Chiricahua raid and plunder the ranches and farms, perhaps retaliating for some offense caused by the investigators?

There are sure to be surviving trognophides left behind after their masters are slain or driven off. These creatures may hole up in their lair in Deep Canyon, waiting for the right moment to slither forth to exact their revenge. Perhaps they raid outlying ranches first, killing folk and livestock ranch by ranch, spreading terror in the region. Or do they strike Stillwater itself?

The technological devices of the serpent people could turn up in others' hands. Prospectors may find weapons to use against their neighbors, or a gang of outlaws may uncover and find a way to use these weapons for a bizarre crime spree. If the investigators still possess some of these devices, the Keeper should determine how long such items function. Certainly, investigators with crystal beam weapons and the like will have a huge advantage in future scenarios, and, if allowed to keep using them, the Keeper should think hard about increasing any opposition they will face. If used in public, the investigators will draw interest and suspicion from anyone around them. It is recommended that such devices work for a limited time, but then fail or run out of charge—ideally, just at the worst possible moment.

Then there are the assorted texts of the serpent people that could have been found in the course of the campaign. If the investigators are able to decipher the language of the serpent

folk, what marvels might they discover in these volumes? Some will undoubtedly be dangerous: new technologies, philosophies, and magic—secrets lost for millennia detailing ancient civilizations, gods, and dimensions heretofore undreamed of by western adventurers. Such knowledge corrupts, draining Sanity and potentially bringing the investigators to the attention of others versed in the truths of the Cthulhu Mythos, be they human or otherwise.

There may be some undead still shambling about in the wilderness around Stillwater and Santa Rosita. Might some insanely enterprising band of thieves capture and “train” these not-dead things to serve as cannon fodder in their robberies? Or might the dead eventually band together to form a ravenous mob intent on attacking ranches and settlements? What if the side effect of the virus that awoke them begins to spread, perhaps through bites inflicted by the undead?

Finally, what of the serpent people? Did any of the serpent scientists escape? More than likely, any surviving serpent folk relocate elsewhere, using disguise serum to travel among humans when necessary. Some might hide in the wilderness with their degenerate kin, while others seek to recreate the virus experiment—perhaps on an even larger scale. The investigators could find themselves tracking an incredibly devious, shape-changing foe across the country in a desperate attempt to stop the reptilian scientists from unleashing a plague upon humanity. Could the cataclysmic eruption of Krakatoa in 1883 have been the result of their plans to spread the virus around the globe? Ash filled the world's skies for months afterward—but was it just ash?

Another possible follow-up is detailed in *The Devil's Round-Up*, an adventure seed found on page 151.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SUGGESTED READING

- “The Seven Geases,” Clark Ashton Smith.
- “The Shadow Kingdom,” Robert E. Howard.
- “Worms of the Earth,” Robert E. Howard.
- “The Children of Yig,” Shannon Appel (*Starry Wisdom* Vol. 1, No. 3).

Smith's story was crucial to the development of this campaign as it is one of few tales to depict the serpent people as scientists (most of this race's appearances depict them as sorcerers). Howard's “Shadow Kingdom” showcases a plot by the serpent folk in ancient times, while “Worms of the Earth” shows the race's degeneration by Roman times. Appel's article is an excellent overview of the history and philosophy of the serpent people, with plenty of good ideas for using them in *Call of Cthulhu*.







BENEATH THE BURNING SUN

This adventure is set in the town of Shade in Valencia County, New Mexico—roughly 55 miles (88.5 km) west-northwest of Albuquerque, and 90 miles (145 km) west of Santa Fe—and concerns a deranged man's schemes to enact a blood sacrifice to a sleeping god. The events and locale described may be used as a follow-on adventure to **The Shadow Over Stillwater** campaign, or act as a stand-alone scenario.

KEEPER INFORMATION

Valencia County, New Mexico, was originally settled in 1868 when Jeremy Cletus Challot found a vast deposit of silver in the Cebolleta Mountains. Soon afterward, and near to Challot's claim, the boomtown of Shade evolved, right in the shadow of the Cebolletas. The area became a beacon to the impoverished settlers of the New Mexico Territory. For those who found no silver, the soil was fertile, and water was found in abundance, which helped contribute to the rapid growth of Shade.

High in the Cebolletas is a large lake, a remnant of the oceans that once covered most of North America. Fed by underground springs, the lake has remained untouched by time for countless eons—yet, all the while, harboring a cosmic menace far older than the lake's origin. Dwelling within the lake is a star-spawn of Cthulhu: a horrible minion of the Sleeper of R'lyeh, whose location poisons Valencia County like a toad at the bottom of a drinking well. Its terrible aura of inhuman evil reaches out to the barren wastes, groping blindly for an agent to carry out its will. Like moths to a flame, the star-spawn has attracted its familiars.

Reverend Elijah Smythe was once a tyrannical pastor of the Mormons, one of the dreaded "Avenging Angels," masked men who rode out under cover of night to defend their faith with torch and gun. For many years, Smythe ruthlessly perpetrated acts of vengeance on the enemies of the Mormons, committing countless acts of evil in the name of his God. Then, the deranged clergyman strayed into the vicinity of the Sleeper in the Lake and, hearing the dark thing's call, had his grip on reality shattered. Now Smythe has a new "god," whom he hopes to appease through the sacrifice of strong and brave men.

Smythe has banded together a disparate group of outlaw trash, from disgraced soldiers to petty cattle rustlers to a deadly gunslinger with a terrible secret of his own. Smythe plans to rob the bank in Shade, leaving behind a bloodbath sure to enrage the locals. This, plus the kidnapping of the mayor's teenage daughter, is sure to draw out a posse—a posse that Smythe intends to lead up the mountain, where he'll offer lawmen and outlaws alike to his god in the lake.

THE INVESTIGATORS

If being used as a follow-on adventure to **The Shadow Over Stillwater** campaign, there are two obvious connections to draw the investigators to the town of Shade: either the pursuit of any escaped serpent people or the hunt for wandering walking dead. Rumors or sightings of either of these quarries can be reported to the posse, who strike out to mop up the stragglers. Should Santa Rosita have perished in a volcanic fury at the close of the campaign, perhaps the investigators arrive in Shade to lick their wounds and rest up before traveling on, bringing them into the events of the scenario.

Opposite: The thing in the lake

Otherwise, what brings the posse to the small, out of the way town of Shade is left for the Keeper to determine. The investigators could be tracking a missing person or a wanted criminal last seen headed to Shade, or they may have heard rumors concerning an old Navajo legend about a “demon of many tongues” that sleeps in the Cebolleta Mountains.

THE TOWN OF SHADE

Shade is a small place, sustained by ranches and a silver mine at the foot of the Cebolleta Mountains. So named because it basks in the very shadow of the mountains, Shade is home to around 300 people.

The town is plagued by occasional outbreaks of violence that, at times, rival the worst excesses of the Bleeding Kansas years and the blood feuds of Texas. The barroom brawls between the miners and cowpokes tend to be bloody and vicious affairs, with more fatal outcomes than similar dust-ups in other towns. These hard-working men are known to resort to gunplay without hesitation.

Despite the fact that criminals are supposed to be remanded to the courts in Belen for trial, there have been over a dozen hangings in Shade. Such lynchings are usually courtesy of

the Valencia County Ranchers’ Vigilance Committee, whose punishments extend to more than just cattle rustling. Shade’s last marshal, Clem Samuels, did nothing to discourage these activities, and most of the townsfolk feel that Samuels’ only decent act as marshal was to hang himself from the rafters of his own jail.

The following section describes the major points of interest within Shade and their associated NPCs. Profiles for key NPCs are provided at the end of the scenario unless otherwise stated. Numerous homes and other businesses are not described, and the Keeper should feel free to create locations and characters as needed to further flesh out the town.

1. The Medicine Show

At noon every day, at the eastern edge of town, Jeffrey Curtis Ottermole sets up his “shop.” Dressed in a spectacular plaid suit and a red top hat, Ottermole barks out in his nails-on-a-chalkboard voice for one and all to witness “the Miracle of Modern Medicine,” as he presents a blue-hued concoction bottled in used whiskey flasks, which Ottermole claims will do everything from remove stains to cure the common cold.

Ottermole may greet the investigators when they first arrive in Shade, as they likely pass him on their way into town. Surprisingly, there is a reasonably sized crowd, with



many buying Ottermole's elixir enthusiastically for the "knock down price of only a \$1 a flask."

Keeper note: the elixir is actually 180-proof alcohol, hence the enthusiasm of the crowd who attest to its wonderful "medicinal" properties. The hawker's red nose and frequently slurred speech suggest that Ottermole also likes to consume his elixir.

Use one of the **Miscellaneous Townspeople of Shade** profiles (page 121) for Ottermole.

2. Maxwell's Dry Goods

Christopher Maxwell runs the dry goods store, providing feed and other supplies to the ranchers in the area. He is a friendly old man who doesn't have a bad word to say about anybody and is assisted by his son, Charles, who spends his days lugging sacks of feed hither and thither.

Use the **Miscellaneous Townspeople of Shade** profiles (page 121) for both Christopher and Charles.

3. Jansen's Livery and Stable

Wilhelmina Jansen owns and operates this stable, assisted by her 17-year-old son, Arthur. Her husband, also called Arthur, was killed two years ago in a bar fight and since then, Wilhelmina has become a very proficient businesswoman. The stables can accommodate all of the investigators' mounts, although the fee is slightly higher than average; however, the horses get the best of care.

Use the **Miscellaneous Townspeople of Shade** profiles (page 121) for Wilhelmina and her son.

4. Blacksmith

Fixing and making horseshoes is the work of Samuel MacCready, a muscle-bound African American who enjoys gambling, and can be found most evenings in **The Rattler's Nest** saloon (page 100) relieving people of their money. MacCready's favored game is poker.

An honest fellow, MacCready deals out "justice" with his fists to those who try to cheat at cards. His calm demeanor and wit have brought him good relations with the ranchers in the area.

Samuel MacCready's profile can be found on page 120.

5. The Shady News

Shade's local newspaper, *The Shady News*, is housed in a small adobe building and is operated by Harris Clemens, a foul-tempered and ill-mannered man. He is almost as happy to find himself out west as cattle are to be in a slaughterhouse, and he's quick to say so if approached. The single-room establishment contains a printing press, a shelf full of reference books, and Clemens' private quarters—a cot in a corner, sectioned off by a blanket hung over a wire.

Keeper note: Clemens seeks out the newly arrived investigators to inquire about any news they may have, asking where they have traveled from and what brings them to Shade. If mention is made of snake people or other strange matters, the investigators can be sure to read all about their exploits (true or otherwise) in the paper's next edition.

Use one of the **Miscellaneous Townspeople of Shade** profiles (page 121) for Clemens, and give him the skills Fast Talk 70% and Persuade at 60%.

6. Reedstrom's Boarding House

The best hotel in town is a large, two-story building opposite the newspaper office. While other establishments offer cheaper lodgings, catering to miners and other laborers, Reedstrom's offers a more restful and genteel stay, with rooms let for 75c a night. The clientele tends to be travelers, business people, and other visitors to the town.

Lance Reedstrom is a tall, 43-year-old Norwegian immigrant. Although he has been in the country for nearly 20 years, his speech is heavily accented and he hasn't yet fully mastered English. Should an investigator staying under his roof cause a ruckus or trouble, Reedstrom has no hesitation in kicking out the entire posse.

Julia Reedstrom is Lance's daughter. An intelligent and pretty 22-year-old, she works in the boarding house, making breakfast, serving guests, and cleaning rooms; she dreams of carving her own path in life.

Keeper note: ideally, Julia Reedstrom should develop a relationship with one or more of the investigators within the first day or so of their arriving in Shade. During **The Robbery** (page 105) she is shot and injured, an action designed to inflame the wrath of the investigators and help to persuade them to join the marshal's posse to catch the robbers (**Forming A Posse**, page 107).

Use the **Miscellaneous Townspeople of Shade** profiles (page 121) for Lance and Julia Reedstrom.

7. The Boxing Ring

Self-proclaimed “Doctor” Beaufort Laird has constructed a boxing ring near to Reedstrom’s establishment. This tenderfoot rogue is promoting Seneca “The Philadelphia Mangler” Stamps, an enormous 23-year-old African-American boxer. Laird continually urges passersby to participate in “*The sport that is all the rage in Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, and all points east!*” Adding, “*Come on up and win \$10 if you can survive three rounds against the Mangler!*”

For a fee of \$2, a challenger can try to last three rounds with the Mangler. If the challenger lasts, “Doctor” Laird, not too happy, pays out \$10. Laird calls the rounds, which last anywhere from four to eight combat rounds, depending on how well the Mangler is faring, and the fight ends early if either boxer is knocked out.

Keeper note: the Philadelphia Mangler’s profile is on page 120. Use the following adjusted rules for the fight. Have each fighter make a **DEX** roll each round to determine who strikes first. A knockout may be scored if a fighter states (before rolling) that they are attempting a knockout maneuver and, if successful, their opponent must make a Hard **CON** roll or fall unconscious. If knocked unconscious, allow an investigator a **Luck** roll to see if they gather their wits enough to get back into the fight before being counted out. Assuming they get back up, once a second knockout has been scored and Hard **CON** roll failed, the investigator is out of the fight (no Luck roll for recovery). Of course, if reduced to zero hit points, the investigator automatically falls unconscious. An investigator can concede the fight at any point. Unless a major wound is caused (ending the fight), damage heals at the rate of 1 hit point per day (2 points if *Pulp Cthulhu*). Lastly, for *Pulp Cthulhu*, Stamps has a small amount of Luck points, which can be used to adjust his skill rolls to add a little spice to the fight.

8. Parker’s General Store

The store carries a reasonable range of goods and supplies, including shotguns, pistols, rifles, and ammunition. While dynamite can be ordered in (taking 1D4+4 days), there is none currently for sale. Refer to *Down Darker Trails* Chapter 2, page 33, for prices. Jake Parker is the owner, a middle-aged ex-postal worker who came to Shade to settle down.

Keeper note: Parker is a devout coward, dominated by his wife, Ethel. After the event at the bank (**The Robbery**, page 105), Ethel’s insistence forces her husband to ride with the posse to capture the thieves. See **Posse Members**, page 108; Parker’s profile is on page 122.

9. Mayor Dawbson’s House

One of the more ornate and larger homes in town, Mayor Rupert Dawbson lives here with his wife Patience and their daughter Margaret. While it is highly unlikely that the investigators are ever invited inside, those who manage to gain a dinner invitation find well-cared-for rooms and a sumptuous meal on offer. Dawbson is a well-meaning man, eager to maintain the status quo; a coward at heart, he is easily swayed by those with a forceful bearing.

Keeper note: when Dawson learns that his daughter Margaret has been abducted following **The Robbery** (page 105), he demands that the marshal gather a posse to pursue the culprits and get his girl back, offering a reward to those who would bring his Margaret home safely.

10. First Bank of Shade

Managed by Eugene Neilson and staffed by sisters Edith and Rose Dooley, the bank caters to the community of Shade, able to store valuables in its large safe. While the bank has enjoyed a trouble-free existence, matters are about to change with **The Robbery** (page 105).

Use the **Miscellaneous Townspeople of Shade** profiles (page 121) for the bank’s staff.

11. Marshal’s Office, Marshal Hosper Otis

Valencia County’s hard-pressed law enforcement consists solely of Marshal Hosper Otis, a sour-faced, eternally serious man, whose duties clearly weigh heavily upon him. Otis is incorruptible and enforces the law with more responsibility than most in his profession. His antipathy toward the Valencia County Ranchers’ Vigilance Committee is well known; however, the influence enjoyed by George Martin (**The Ranches**, page 101) and his followers have, to date, meant that the marshal had been powerless to take them to task.

See **Posse Members**, page 108; Marshal Otis’ profile is on page 122.

12. Schoolhouse

Teaching the sons and daughters of Shade, Henry Potts is a young teacher, originally from El Paso. The building is a two-room structure, with a large classroom and an office in the rear, where Potts can be found when he’s not instructing the children.

Keeper note: Potts is the first to volunteer to join the posse following the bank robbery. For further information on the teacher, see **Posse Members**, page 108; his profile is on page 122.

13. Silver Shaft Saloon

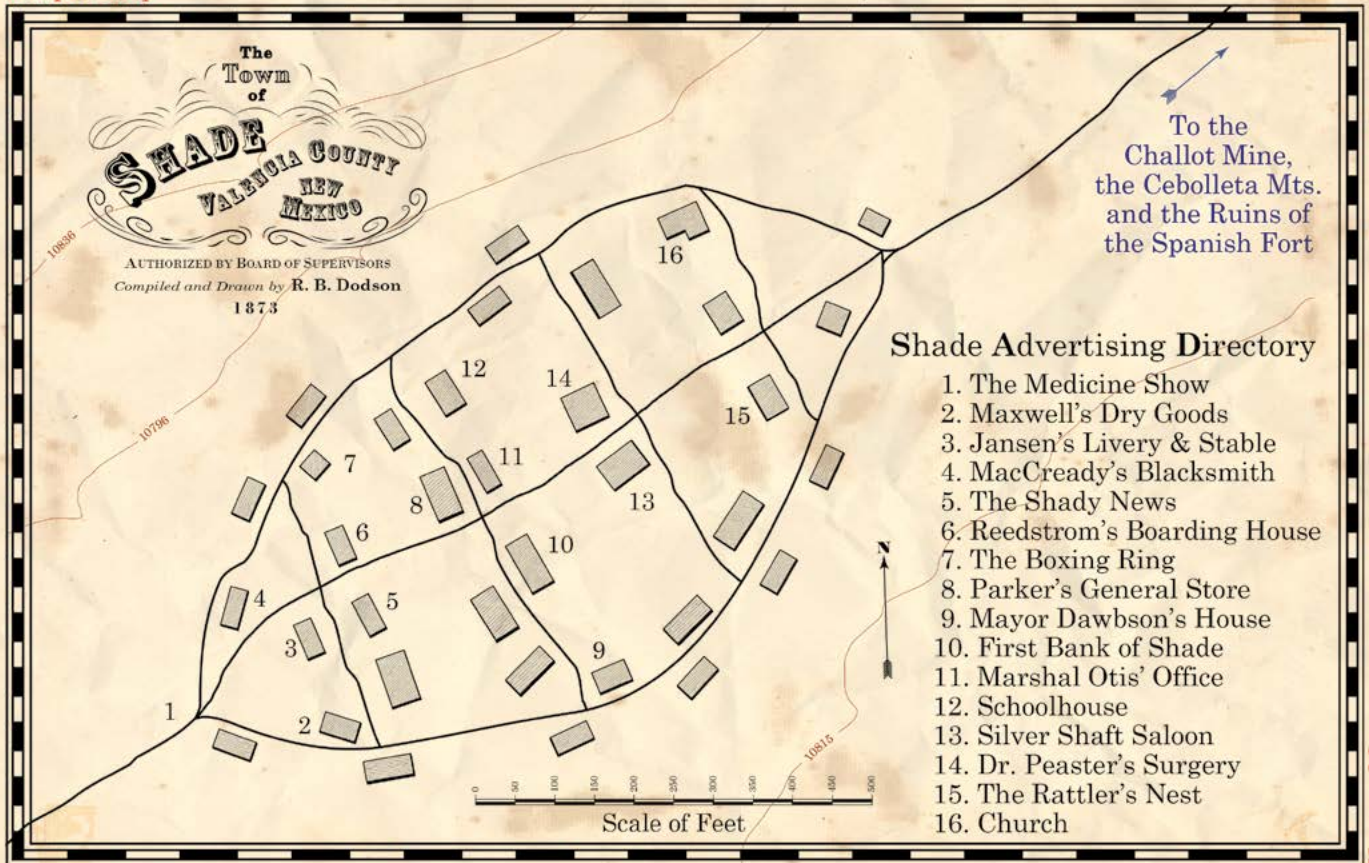
The larger and classier of Shade's two saloons, the Silver Shaft is two stories high, with the ground floor housing the bar, gambling tables, and a stage, while the upper floor is given over to rooms for private hire or entertainment with the establishment's bevy of hostesses. The rooms can be hired for 50c a night by investigators preferring the rough and tumble of the saloon as opposed to the genteel elegance of Reedstrom's Boarding House.

The barkeep is Joe Bergersen, a thin man in his early forties with a long and drooping mustache, who is always friendly with strangers, so long as they behave themselves—he keeps a sawed-off 10-gauge shotgun under the bar, just in case. Bergersen loves to hear news of the outside world. The faro table is usually crowded with cowboys and miners. The dealer, Lefty Jones, is employed by the saloon, and runs an honest game—he has a .41 derringer (2-shot) in his vest pocket to deal with anyone who thinks otherwise.

Set against the far wall of the saloon is a low stage for the live entertainment. Magicians, musicians, animal acts, and dancing acts have all performed here at one time or another. At present, the French Belles, a troupe of female dancers is the saloon's entertainment. Billed as French can-can girls, these ladies are performing here as one of their stops between Santa Fe and San Francisco. The girls' road manager, Reginald Carter (a fat little man in a tweed suit), is always seated close to the stage. The six girls speak in feigned French accents that fool no one familiar with that language. Despite their skimpy costumes and the lecherous catcalls of the male audience, these ladies are performers, not prostitutes. While lewd comments are allowed, and more or less expected from the crowd, anyone attempting to touch the girls finds himself at odds with Thomas McDonald, the saloon's bouncer.

Below: The town of Shade and map

Keeper Map



Keeper Map

McDonald sits next to the stage, with his back against the wall; a big, burly Irishman who used to work for the railroad, he now spends his days beating the tar out of drunks. While he loves a good scrap, the bouncer prefers to take altercations outside the saloon. To help keep things quiet, he usually keeps a sawed-off 12-gauge shotgun resting in his lap.

Sitting at the table to the left of McDonald is Eddie “Snakebite” Fawson, Shade’s resident cardsharp, who is always willing to part another sucker from his money. Fawson dresses in a fancy black frock coat, black trousers, and a white ruffled shirt. Eagle-eyed investigators may notice the pearl-gripped butt of a small revolver protruding from the pocket of his red velvet vest. Fawson presents the classic image of a cardsharp, with slicked-back black hair and a Van Dyke beard. Never one to play honest, Fawson uses a variety of

methods to cheat, be it his polished ring allowing him to see the underside of cards as he deals them, a marked deck, or a “Jacobs ladder”—a spring device up his sleeve that places a card in his hand when triggered.

Keeper note: Fawson has Gambling 75%, Sleight of Hand 75%, and Fast Talk 45%, which may be opposed by Gambling, Spot Hidden, and Psychology, respectively.

If caught cheating, Fawson goes for his gun and tries to shoot his accuser before attempting to leave the saloon. If caught, he pleads for his life while the gathering crowd calls for a rope. Unless the investigators intervene, Fawson is strung up and hanged from the guardrail of the saloon’s balcony. If they try to stop the lynching, the investigators need to hold off the mob, requiring a successful **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate**, or **Persuade** roll at Hard difficulty; otherwise, the crowd overpowers them and hangs the little rat. If Fawson is saved from the rope, he is ever grateful and could, at some later point, assist the investigators in a meaningful way (breaking them out of jail, saving a life, and so on); however, the residents of Shade dislike their “fun” being stopped, so future social skill rolls with the common townsfolk are at an increased difficulty or suffer a penalty die—the Keeper should apply this diligently, as there are a few in Shade (such as the marshal) who might see their actions as beneficial, so don’t apply the penalty in such cases.

See page 120 for the profiles of Joe Bergersen, Lefty Jones, Thomas McDonald, and Eddie “Snakebite” Fawson.

14. Doctor Peaster

The town’s doctor has his surgery here, with a waiting room, consultation room, private office, and operating room. With the town’s propensity for violence, Peaster is a fairly accomplished surgeon due to the number of bullets he’s picked out of flesh, and knife wounds he’s stitched back together. He’s a good friend of the mayor and the marshal and, if presented with anything suspicious, he is likely to report it.

The doctor’s profile is on page 121.

15. The Rattler’s Nest

This is the less savory of Shade’s watering holes, a single-story dive frequented by the poorest, most desperate, ill-tempered miners, cowhands, and criminals. The furnishings are cheap and flimsy since they are constantly being replaced or repaired after bar fights. The drinks are unusually strong—treat each shot as a triple measure in terms of alcohol content, referring to the **Alcohol Consumption** table on page 51 of *Down Darker Trails*.

THE GAME OF FARO

Faro is one of the most popular card games on the frontier. The game is played on a felt tabletop printed with the 13 cards of the spade suit, ace to six from right to left on the top row, the seven off to the left side by itself, and eight to king from left to right on the bottom row—this is called “the spread.” Players place their stake on any of these card-prints, and the dealer draws two cards from a special box: anyone who bet on the first card drawn loses their stake, and anyone who bet on the second card wins their stake. If a pair is dealt, the bank takes half of the bet. Suits don’t matter, only the card values. Bets that neither won nor lost remain on the table and can be picked up or changed by the players before the next draw.

On the table near the card-box is an abacus-like device with four beads on thirteen rods adjacent to images of the cards, which the dealer moves to show which cards have been dealt. This device allows gamblers to see which cards have come up and which remain in the deck, and so determine their odds of winning.

Bettors can also “copper” their bets by placing a six-sided token on a card along with their bet, which reverses the bet so that if the first card is drawn, a coppered bet would win rather than lose, or lose rather than win on the second card.

Some dealers cheat by using boxes that allow two cards to be drawn simultaneously rather than one at a time. Another common cheat is to “stack the deck” with pairs so that the house automatically wins half of the bets.

One of the regular patrons of the Nest is Arthur McLeary, a semi-famous dime novelist whose credits include the “true life” western adventures *Kid Lightning—Fastest Gun Alive*, *Kid Lightning and the Rustlers*, and *Kid Lightning in Texas*. McLeary is an energetic and outgoing fellow, well versed in the legends of the West. He recognizes any well-known gunfighter, outlaw, or lawman among the investigators, and requests an interview with these heroes, with the drinks on his tab. A few months after such an interview, the investigators’ adventures appear in a new novel from McLeary, with their exploits attributed to Kid Lightning.

Another, more dangerous denizen of the Rattler’s Nest is Jedediah “Arkansas” Cantrell, a 58-year-old walking relic of the War Between the States. He has long red hair coupled with a fiery beard and mustache, and wears a shabby Confederate shell jacket and kepi cap. On his hip, he carries a huge black powder Walker Dragoon. When he was 13, he rode with Bloody Bill Anderson and William Quantrill and, after the war, he gunned down “a damn carpetbaggin’ Yankee,” resulting in a hasty relocation to the New Mexico Territory. Cantrell is loud-mouthed and ill-tempered but keeps to himself most of the time. He occasionally heads into the mountains to prospect for gold, raising just enough to return to Shade and buy drinks for a few days. When drunk—which is often—Cantrell sings old Rebel songs (such as “I’m a Good Ole Rebel” and “Dixie.”) He’ll go out of his way to insult anyone who disrespects the Confederacy, but just as quickly dismisses the offender as “not worth killing.”

See page 121 for the profiles of Arthur McLeary and Jedediah “Arkansas” Cantrell.

16. Church

A more or less full house can be found on Sunday mornings in Reverend Bowman’s church, with the majority of townspeople in their best clothes. A true man of God, the reverend seeks to turn the people of Shade away from a lust for gold to find bounty in the Word of the Lord. An aging soul, Bowman has unkempt and receding white hair and, possibly, the longest beard in town.

Use one of the **Miscellaneous Townspeople of Shade** profiles (page 121) for Reverend Bowman.

THE RANCHES

The land in Valencia County is particularly fertile for the desert, with numerous waterholes and underground springs riddling the area. Thus, many ranchers have been drawn to the region, most notably the Challots, the Martins, and the Mendozas.

The Challot ranch is the largest in the area. Coupled with the silver mine established by Jeremy Challot, the Challots are the wealthiest family living and working near Shade. Each year, the ranch runs several hundred head of cattle to the railhead in Denver. During this scenario, the bulk of the Challots’ ranch hands are on one of these drives.

The Mendozas have the second largest ranch, though they have achieved this distinction, not by hard or fair work. The Mendozas are anything but honest ranchers, and the ornate “M” which marks their cattle is the epitome of a robber’s brand, capable of covering any number of other brands. Referred to as the “Magical Mexican Mendoza Herd,” locals reflect that the Mendoza herd always seems to grow in size when reports of rustling trickle in from the ranches beyond the Cebolletas. While ruthless and opportunistic, the Mendozas are smart enough not to steal from their neighbors in Shade.

The smallest of the three ranches, the Martins have nevertheless secured a contract to supply beef to the U.S. Cavalry. These misanthropes are the progenitors of the “Valencia County Ranchers’ Vigilance Committee” and patriarch George Martin is the chairman of this vigilante group. A trigger-happy bunch, George Martin’s sons often ride into the mountains and points west hoping to find bandits or rustlers or anyone they can fight. Indeed, George Martin is not shy of tracking down trouble, having won several gunfights with squatters found on his property.

See **Posse Members**, page 108; profiles for George Martin and also two example ranch hands/vigilantes—Ralph “Hoss” Williams and Cliff Brennert—can be found in **The Posse**, page 122.

THE MINE

Challot Mine lies to the west of Shade, where it descends into the base of the Cebolletas. Over the years, Jeremy Challot and his family have made an enviable fortune from the mine, but at a tragic cost, as the mine has claimed more than its share of human life. Frequent cave-ins, floods from an underground spring, and other accidents have troubled the workers since the mine opened.

THE CEBOLLETA MOUNTAINS

Most people don’t travel far into the northern reaches of the Cebolletas. The only white man fool enough to call this part of the Cebolletas home is the crazed Josey Jackson, who has lived in the mountains since Jeremy Challot first discovered silver. Jackson found no silver himself, but he did find madness when he came upon the lake in which the star-spawn of Cthulhu sleeps. Affected by the psychic sendings

of the sleeper, Jackson has been sacrificing all manner of animals to “the angel in the lake” for several years now.

Near to the spawn’s lake stands the ruin of an ancient Spanish fort. Long abandoned and neglected, the fort now has the forbidding nickname of *el fuerte de la muerte*—the fort of death (see **The Fort**, page 117). Currently, Jackson makes his home in the old fort.

Keeper note: Josey Jackson is “friends” with Reverend Smythe—see **Reverend Smythe’s Gang**, page 109—and while he plays no part in the bank robbery, he is encountered later when the investigators head into the Cebolletas after the criminals.

About a day’s ride into the mountains is a Navajo village, composed of hogans, and home to around 20 people—see **The Navajo Village**, page 113, for further details.

RUMORS HEARD IN SHADE

Each day the investigators spend in Shade, they can hear the following—depending on how the investigators interact with the locals, a successful social skill roll or some free drinks in one of the saloons nets a couple of rumors at a time. Choose or roll 1D10 to determine which tale is told—not all are true.

1. An awful lot of cattle rustling is going on in these parts, more than usual, and that’s saying something.
2. Something’s not right in the water, all these folks killing themselves the past couple years. Heck, Marshal Samuels hanged himself right there in the jail. Lots of talk about devil-filled nightmares driving folk crazy and making them do it.
3. That fella Arkansas Cantrell is one bad egg. They say he kept killing Yankees after the war, and that’s why he came out here to the desert.
4. It’s funny, the way the Mendoza herd comes and goes. What’s even funnier is that with all the rustling that’s been going on lately, even the Magical Mendoza Herd is shrinking. Must be a new team of rustlers on the patch.
5. That outfit George Martin started up calls itself a committee, but they’re just vigilantes, if you ask me. If he thinks he can do Marshal Otis’ job better, why don’t he pin on the star and do it legal?
6. That crazy preacher Reverend Smythe ain’t a real Christian Bible-man. No, he’s one of them Mormons they say. Except he ain’t got a heap of wives like most of them do.

7. You want to see a good fight, you go watch that big buck over at Reedstrom’s sometime. Call him the Philadelphia Mangler, and he’s got fists like bricks.
8. Had some of that miracle potion that fella sells down at the end of the street. Kicks like a mule, but it give me the trots something terrible.
9. I wouldn’t play poker with Snakebite Fawson if I were you. He wins way too many hands to be playing fair, I reckon.
10. There’s a famous writer-fella hangs out at the Rattler’s Nest. Always willing to buy a drink to hear a good story, or so they say.

EVENTS

With the investigators arrived in Shade, give them some time to settle in and meet the locals. The following events, presented in a suggested order of occurrence, can take place as the Keeper desires. When ready, move the action on to **The Robbery**, page 105, which begins the core adventure proper.

THE SERMON IN THE SALOON

Investigators dropping by the Silver Shaft Saloon have their drinking and gambling interrupted by a single gunshot. Turning, they discover the shooter is a large man dressed in a long black coat and wide-brimmed plainsman hat. He holds an enormous black book and a smoking pistol, the latter of which he returns to its holster before grinning contemptuously at the crowd.

“Now that I have interrupted your heathen debaucheries, pay my words heed, o vile spawn of iniquity. Repent your ways! Open your hearts to the Lord! Cast from you the vile servitude of Mammon! Seek out the Lord in your dreams!”

He continues on, but most patrons ignore him and soon return to their drinks and games. The preacher—Reverend Smythe—stammers on for a few more moments before taking a riding crop from his boot and smashing it across the bottles nearest to him on the bar.

“You have spurned salvation! You would not hear the truth, but soon you shall see it for yourselves! But then it shall be the judgement and too late for repentance, and you shall be crushed beneath the wrath of the holy!” With that, the preacher turns on his heel, marches to his horse, and rides out of town.

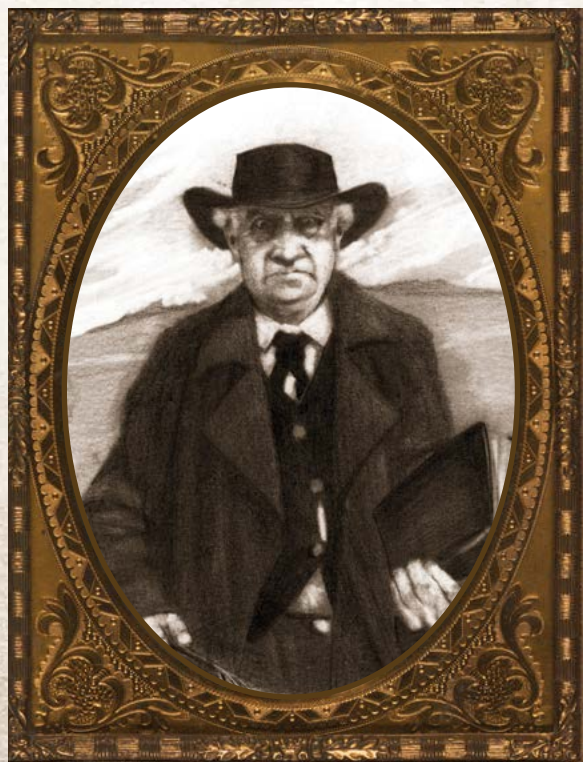
Keeper note: this is the investigators’ first encounter with Reverend Smythe and it should be short and sour. If the investigators try to intervene, Smythe glares at them and exits before they really have a chance to speak to him. See the box nearby for details on Smythe, while his profile is on page 125.

NORTH VS. SOUTH, AGAIN

Should the investigators visit the Rattler's Nest saloon, allow them the opportunity to converse with Arthur McLeary the writer and also Jedediah "Arkansas" Cantrell, then, at an opportune moment, trouble shows up in the form of a black-garbed gunfighter.

The gunfighter wears black gloves, a white shirt with pearl buttons, a gray double-breasted vest, black pants, a long black duster, and knee-high cavalry boots. A black slouch hat hides much of his face. The gold spurs on his heels are fashioned in the shape of Chinese dragons. Three holsters adorn his gun belt, one at each hip and a third across his belly, each holding a .45 Colt Peacemaker plated in gold and silver. What can be seen of the man's skin is pale and almost leprous. His long, ragged hair is gray and thin, spilling out from beneath the back of his hat.

Keeper note: a successful **Spot Hidden** or **Firearms (Handgun)** roll notes that the man's pistols have had the sights filed off and the trigger-guards removed to add to the gunfighter's speed. The pistols have delicately carved scrimshaw grips that, if later carefully examined, are found to depict New England harbor scenes.



Reverend Elijah Smythe

If the investigators are sitting with McLeary or within earshot of him, he gasps and hides his face until the gunfighter passes to the bar. If asked, in a whisper McLeary says that this is Joseph "Boston" Bishop, a deadly gunslinger from Massachusetts credited with the deaths of over a dozen men. Four of these were killed when Boston managed to beat them all to the draw—despite the fact that two of them had their guns already drawn and were *behind* Boston at the time. McLeary is nervous because no one had seen Boston for some time, so the writer exercised a little poetic license and attributed Boston's disappearance to a fatal case of lead poisoning, courtesy of Kid Lightning, in his latest publication. McLeary quietly prays that Boston hasn't read the book...

REVEREND SMYTHE

Reverend Elijah Smythe is the insane slave of the star-spawn. Approaching 56 years of age, Smythe has heard the whispered secrets of the entity in the mountain lake, corrupting his beliefs to create a twisted religion based upon Mormonism and the Cthulhu Mythos. Indeed, he carries a large black book with him, a copy of the Book of Mormon that he has defaced and "corrected" to reflect his newfound religion.

While Smythe is unlikely to use magic when in Shade, he will make use of his spells (*Breath of The Deep*, *Dominate*, and *Shrivelling*) when encountered at **The Mountaintop Lake** (page 114).

- **Description:** portly and large, with a ring of white hair on the crown of his head, he wears a long black coat and a wide-brimmed plainsman hat. He carries his "corrected" Book of Mormon and a black riding crop.
- **Traits:** intense eyes stare and hold the gaze of others; his speech is fevered and fanatical, and he demands absolute respect.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** his motivation is to free the star-spawn in the lake and ensure himself a place in the dark heaven that is R'lyeh when Great Cthulhu rises.

See page 125 for Smythe's profile, while details about his band of followers can be found in **Reverend Smythe's Gang**, page 109.

Luckily for McLeary, Boston is unconcerned with the writer. He downs a couple of drinks before Cantrell starts loudly singing “The Plains of Manassas,” deliberately goading the newcomer. Boston wryly suggests that Cantrell shuts his mouth, “*Before he has every bitch coyote in the Cebolletas in here for a rut.*” At this, Cantrell suggests, “*We’d best step outside and see if this blue-belly pig can shoot as fancy as he dresses.*” The black-clad gunman grins, nods, and turns his back on Cantrell as he starts for the door. Eagle-eyed investigators see Cantrell reach for his gun, but it never leaves the holster. In a blur, Boston spins, draws both hip guns and fires, putting a bullet through each of Cantrell’s eyes. The body then topples backwards to the floor.

“*Guess he saw the error of his ways,*” says Boston dryly. He tips his hat, exits the Rattler’s Nest, takes the reins of his horse, and heads down the street. Those watching for more than a few moments see him being accosted by a large man in black wearing a plainsman hat. The investigators may recognize this as Reverend Smythe. After what appears to be a brief argument, the pair rides off together, toward the north.

See **Reverend Smythe’s Gang**, page 109, for further details about Joseph “Boston” Bishop; his profile is on page 124.

BAD DREAMS

Within the first couple nights of their stay in Shade, the investigators’ sleep may be disturbed. Ask for a **POW** roll and use the following guide to shape each investigator’s dream while applying the appropriate Sanity loss (asking for a **Sanity** roll as appropriate).

- **Extreme success:** restless sleep filled with dark images barely remembered (no Sanity loss).
- **Hard Success:** the dreamer is submerged beneath dark waters, looking up to the surface into the night sky, dimly lit by moon and stars. Whispered voices seem to taunt, but no words are recalled. A deep sense of sorrow pervades them (0/1 Sanity loss).
- **Regular Success:** the dreamer is submerged beneath dark waters, looking up to the surface into the night sky, dimly lit by moon and stars. Voices, muffled by the water, can be heard speaking, “*The sleeper, fhtagn!*” and a great sense of dread swallows the dreamer as if all of the joy were being leeches out of them (1/1D4 Sanity loss).
- **Fail:** the dreamer is submerged beneath dark waters, looking up to the surface into the night sky, dimly lit by stars. Slowly the stars begin to wink out, till there is only a black void that seems to pull the dreamer upward. Voices can be heard



saying, *"The sleeper stirs, let the way be opened. Ia! Cthulhu fhtagn!"* An awful dread freezes the dreamer, who is unable to move as they are pulled up through the icy cold water to the black void above. All feels pointless and futile; the dreamer's hope and dreams melt away into anguish and despair. Suddenly, the view changes and the dreamer sees a dead body floating in the water—their body! (1D3/1D4+2 Sanity loss).

These dreams are caused by the unconscious dream sending of the star-spawn in the mountaintop lake, and the investigators aren't the only ones to have them. A few sensitive people in town and throughout the region also suffer such dreams—including one on this very night.

At around 4:00 am, the investigators are woken from their respective nightmares by a commotion in the street outside of their lodgings (possibly Reedstrom's Boarding House or the Silver Shaft Saloon). If looking out of a window, they see two men drag the sopping wet body of a third man into the lodging house. Curious investigators may go down to see what's happening, with the men hastily explaining that they are miners and have rooms across the way. Their companion woke up screaming, ran into the street, and then dived into the nearest horse trough, apparently trying to drown himself.

The third man, dressed only in his wet long johns, his eyes glazed, mouths silent words. A successful **Listen** roll discerns the words, *"Ia! Cthulhu fhtagn!"* Any investigator who heard a similar phrase in their dreams should make a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss), as they recognize the gibberish words from the nightmare from which they were just awakened! The dazed man remains in a trance, although a Hard **Psychoanalysis** roll may revive him. Otherwise, the miners send for Doctor Peaster and then Reverend Bowman. The doctor's treatment is ineffective, so Reverend Bowman tries to coax the man from his reverie. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notes that the man's eyes follow the priest's wooden crucifix; if the cross is placed before him, a successful **Psychoanalysis** roll at Regular difficulty snaps him out of the trance.

Asked why he tried to kill himself, he weeps and says, *"For three nights I tried to fight him, I swear, padre. It were the Devil, the Devil come to me in the shape of a great fish with a beard of snakes, telling me things in my dreams, terrible things. Ia! Cthulhu fhtagn! He told me to walk into the dark and come to him. And then he showed me what he is going to do to me when I get there. He showed me all the others like him. They all live in a dark castle where the fish fly and there ain't no stars."* Reverend Bowman continues to comfort the man and offers him sanctuary in the church.

Should the investigators decide to follow up on these events, inquiring whether anyone else has been suffering from bad dreams, they learn that a handful of miners and

ranch hands in the area have committed suicide over the past few months; all had spoken of having nightmares before they died. If the doctor is questioned, Peaster suspects some sort of fever or blood disease, although he could find nothing in common with the victims, and few had any contact with one another. Reverend Bowman confirms that many of his flock have been suffering from nightmares, and he confirms that a number of poor souls took their own lives, forsaking God and eternal life in heaven. *"Such is to be expected where men gather for the sake of greed. Those who serve gold are but a step away from service to the Enemy. Faith is the only panacea to combat such foul powers, for there can be no salvation for those who do not believe in the glory of the Lord."*

THE ROBBERY

When appropriate, ideally the morning after the town was plagued by nightmares, Reverend Smythe puts his plan into action. By mid-morning he has already sent Manson Challot, son of the town's founder, to lure Mayor Rupert Dawson's daughter, Margaret, out so she can be kidnapped. Challot takes the girl with him to the First Bank of Shade "on an errand," and, at 11:00 am sharp, Reverend Smythe arrives to enact the robbery.

Two-bit rustlers Billy Stevens and Arizona Hawkins lounge inside the bank when Smythe enters. The preacher steps up to the counter, smacks down his riding crop, saying loudly, *"Ladies and gentlemen, the rich do not enter paradise, so, to save your souls, I am here to relieve you of your worldly wealth and prepare you for the resurrection."* When no one understands his words, he draws his revolver and demands the cash in blunter terms.

Hawkins guards the front door while Stevens opens the back to admit the gunman Boston. Smythe forces the bank tellers, Edith and Rose Dooley, to empty the tills and vault, while keeping his gun on manager Eugene Neilson. All the while, Smythe babbles corrupted passages from the Book of Mormon. Meanwhile, Boston rounds up anyone else in the bank, herding them together and warning them to keep quiet, while Challot binds and gags Margaret Dawson.

With the money secured and the bank employees and other customers gathered at the front of the building, Smythe's gang files out, leaving Stevens behind, who waits for Manson Challot to bring his horse around to the back door. With the mayor's daughter in tow, Smythe and his gang jump on their horses, and ride out of town, except for Manson Challot, who rides down the main street shouting that the bank is being robbed. With the town alerted, Challot turns about and rides north to join the gang as they ride into the mountains, leaving Stevens alone in the bank.

Keeper note: clearly, for the sake of the plot, the investigators should be nowhere near to the bank when the robbery takes place. Ideally, they are gambling in a saloon, challenging the Philadelphia Mangler, or talking to the doctor or priest about the recent suicides when the action takes place.

THE HOSTAGE SITUATION

When Manson Challot doesn't show up out back with his horse, and folks start shouting outside, Billy Stevens knows he's in trouble. Thinking the gang was scared off, unwilling to believe they'd just leave him, and absolutely terrified of hanging, Stevens is determined to escape. He's just bright enough to think of using the people in the bank as hostages, calling out that he'll start killing them if anyone tries to enter the bank. He demands a horse and for everyone to get off the streets or he'll start shooting folk.

Keeper note: no matter where the investigators are, they should now have heard Manson Challot shouting about the robbery, and see the general commotion, as the townsfolk begin to gather outside the bank.

When he doesn't get a coherent answer, Stevens drags poor Edith Dooley to the front door and blows her in half with his 10-gauge shotgun. As Edith's corpse splatters into the street, Stevens shouts, "*I ain't kiddin' now, ya hear?*" Witnesses to this carnage, which causes some of the townspeople to faint or cry out in anger, should make a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss).

The shocked townspeople cover the bank from all angles with rifles while they send a rider out to the Mendoza ranch to find Marshal Otis, who is currently looking into the Mendozas' claims that some of their cattle have been stolen.

Keeper note: indeed, Smythe's men stole the cattle to draw the marshal out of town while the robbery took place. It's over an hour before the marshal returns to town, so the investigators may decide to be heroes and save the day.

It's unclear to those outside the bank how many robbers are still inside the building. Most of the townsfolk believe several robbers are holed up in the bank and are unwilling to act for fear of risking the hostages; most are content to wait for the marshal. Smart investigators notice that there are no horses tied up out front, and a successful **Listen** roll surmises that only one voice is barking orders from within.

Just before the marshal arrives, Steven calls out from inside the bank, "*I ain't messin' I tells ya.*" A single shot rings out and screams are heard from within the bank.

Keeper note: Stevens has shot Julia Reedstrom (**Reedstrom's Boarding House**, page 97), who was in the bank this morning to deliver the boarding house's takings. While not fatally wounded, she now lies in a pool of blood inside the bank.

The Marshal Arrives

Unless the investigators take matters into their own hands, Marshal Otis eventually arrives and tries to appeal to the gang with an offer of, "*Let the people go and we'll get you horses and you can leave.*" Stevens replies that he won't be tricked, even though this is exactly what he's asking for.

A successful **Psychology** roll correctly assumes that the robber(s) is too scared to leave, and is as dangerous as any trapped animal. After several hours, with Stevens threatening to kill more hostages, Marshal Otis decides to cause a distraction by leading a horse to the front of the bank while others go around the back and try to break in and gun the robbers down. Stevens and at least one hostage will die if this plan is enacted, in addition to any other casualties inflicted in the ensuing gunfight.

Billy Stevens' profile can be found on page 123.

Calling the Robber Out

If an investigator negotiating with Stevens, or if they have been listening to the marshal's negotiations, succeeds with a **Psychology** or Hard **INT** roll, they realize the young-sounding bank robber is trying to sound tough, and that he doesn't want to be taken for a coward. If challenged along lines of, "*A real man wouldn't hide behind a bunch of hostages,*" or "*Jesse James never killed an unarmed man,*" or something similar, Stevens snaps and charges out the door, cutting loose with the shotgun before going for his pistol—if he lives that long. Even if the investigators do nothing, Stevens doesn't get three paces out the door before he goes down under a veritable shower of lead from the townspeople.

Consequences

If it is an investigator who goads Stevens to come out of the bank, each person then slain by Stevens costs that investigator a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss). If no one is killed when Stevens comes out, the investigator(s) concerned can be rewarded with +1 Sanity point for successfully handling the hostage situation.

Julia Reedstrom needs attention for her gunshot wound, which has luckily missed her vital organs. Either Doctor Peaster or an investigator making a successful **First Aid** roll can bind Julia's wound.

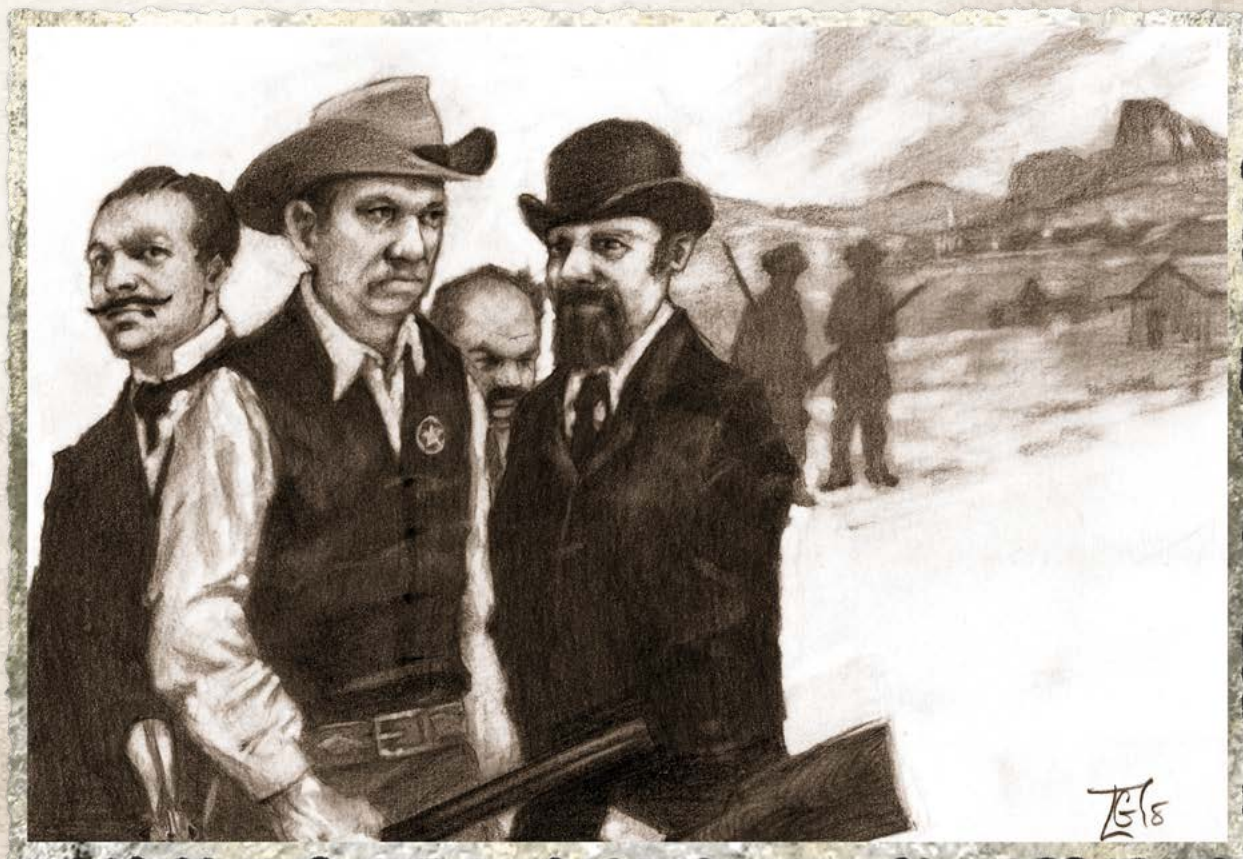
Forming A Posse

Once rescued, the hostages relate how the robbery went down to those assembled outside, saying that the thieves kidnapped Mayor Dawbson's daughter. As outrage and anger whips up the crowd, Dawbson loudly demands that the marshal gathers a posse to pursue the robbers and get his girl back. Marshal Otis settles the crowd down and offers \$25 to those who will ride with him; however, Dawbson immediately ups the amount to \$100, much to the crowd's approval.

As the investigators contemplate joining the posse, other townsfolk volunteer to ride along. The first to join is schoolmaster Henry Potts—he is secretly romancing one of the women from the Navajo village north of town and fears the outlaws may be headed in that direction; he may not be much of a gunman, but Marshal Otis needs all the help he can get. Rancher George Martin and two of his hands are the next to offer their services. Martin stands beside the marshal and begins ranting about restoring law and order and bringing the thieving polecats to justice, brandishing a pistol as he does so. Many of the townsfolk cheer at Martin's pronouncements, so the marshal is stuck with the vigilantes for the time being—see **Posse Members**, nearby, for the full details on which townspeople join up to track down the outlaws.

Keeper note: hopefully, the investigators volunteer for the posse—if they don't, then the adventure ends here! One tactic to employ is to play on any relationship developed with Julia Reedstrom, with the injured Julia asking the investigators to catch the robbers before she falls unconscious due to her gunshot wound. If necessary, to further gild the lily, the mayor could increase the reward to \$130 each.

With the posse gathered, Marshal Otis heads to **Parker's General Store** (page 98), where he appropriates a .44–40 Winchester rifle (2D6+1 damage) and two boxes of ammunition for each volunteer. As the newly armed posse turns to leave the store, Ethel Parker shrieks that her husband Jake is going too, “*Don't you dare leave without this husband of mine! Maybe when he comes back he'll be more of a man!*” She shoves a rifle into his scrawny arms and pushes him out the door. The marshal then leads everyone down to the town livery, where he commandeers horses for those who don't have their own.



Members of the posse

POSSE MEMBERS

In addition to the investigators, the posse includes Marshal Otis, schoolteacher Henry Potts, storekeeper Jake Parker, and rancher George Martin and two of his ranch-hands, Cliff Brennert and Hoss Williams.

Marshal Hosper Otis, age 46, leader

An upright lawman, he does his best to keep the peace in town. Otis resents the Vigilante Committee but has, so far, been unable to break the influence that George Martin holds over the mayor and the folks of Shade.

- **Description:** above average height and broad-shouldered, with a sour face and weathered features.
- **Traits:** eternally serious, hard but fair.

Henry Potts, age 24, schoolteacher

Originally from El Paso, Potts has come to the New Mexico Territory to forget a less-than-pleasant life in the Lone Star state. Potts is secretly having a relationship with Lolotea, a woman from the Navajo village in the Cebolleta Mountains—an affair that, if it came to light, would likely necessitate his moving on again, as such relationships are frowned upon by the people of Shade. Still, his affection for Lolotea is genuine, and it is this love that drives the schoolteacher to join the posse to make sure the outlaws do not harm her or her village.

- **Description:** slim and long-limbed, with a goatee beard, his clothes are simple but well made.
- **Traits:** dislikes bullies; fearful that something might have happened to Lolotea.

Jake Parker, age 38, storeowner

A devout coward, Parker is dominated by his wife. When she insists he ride with the posse, the thin man does so, fearing her wrath if he disobeys. At the first sign of danger, he is liable to flee and seek to return to town unless an investigator succeeds with a **Fast Talk**, **Persuade**, or **Intimidate** roll to convince him to stay with the posse.

- **Description:** scrawny and thin, wears disheveled clothes, with a long, drooping mustache.
- **Traits:** a coward, he does what others tell him to but looks to flee to safety.

George Martin, age 48, rancher and vigilante

Patriarch of the local ranching family, Martin is also the ringleader of the Valencia County Ranchers' Vigilance Committee. A headstrong man, who believes that the courts are too soft on criminals, he prefers to take the law into his own hands. Martin and his men have left more than a few grisly corpses swinging from trees as a reminder of what happens to criminals in Valencia County. Martin and his men accompany the posse to make sure these criminals don't escape what he calls "true justice."

- **Description:** large and overbearing, his clothing is fine and expensive, while his mustache is expertly waxed.
- **Traits:** no sense of personal space, belligerent and domineering.

Cliff Brennert and Ralph "Hoss" Williams, both age 24, ranch hands and vigilantes

As well as employees, Brennert and Williams are members of Martin's vigilante group. They follow his orders (and his orders alone), so the marshal or investigators must convince Martin of a course of action before they can get the ranch hands to go along. If Martin leaves the posse, the cowboys go too; and if Martin is killed, they must be **Intimidated** or **Persuaded** to stay with the group.

- **Description:** tough-looking with sun-creased features, dressed in typical cowboy gear.
- **Traits:** they follow their boss' orders to the letter and like to make jokes at the expense of others.

Profiles for **The Posse** are on page 122.



REVEREND SMYTHE'S GANG

The gang consists of the crazed reverend, the gunfighter Boston, Manson Challot, and a band of cattle rustlers led by a disgraced former Army Sergeant, Thomas O'Neil. Billy Stevens was a member of the gang but is presumed killed in the aftermath of the bank robbery.

Joseph "Boston" Bishop, *age 32, gunfighter and deep one hybrid*

A native of Innsmouth, Massachusetts, who fled when he became aware of the curse suffered by many residents as a result of their commingling with the deep ones dwelling just offshore. In an attempt to avoid the curse, Boston journeyed to San Francisco, where he learned his trade with a gun and began making a name for himself as a hired killer.

Unfortunately, his proximity to the sea awakened Boston's tainted blood and, feeling changes coming upon him, he fled to the deserts of southern California, where he met Elijah Smythe. The reverend heard Boston's confession and learned of his "condition," promising that he could cure Boston if he agreed to follow the preacher. Boston believes that the reverend is the only person who can save him from turning into a monster and, consequently, fervently follows the preacher's commands.

Manson Challot, *age 23, spoiled rich kid and outlaw*

The spoiled youngest son of the Challot family, whose wealth comes from the mine near to Shade, Manson recently fell under the spell of Reverend Smythe. The preacher promised the young man power and wealth beyond his imagination; thus, Challot is ready to go along with whatever Smythe proposes. On hearing of his association with Smythe, Manson's family disowned him.

Josey Jackson, age 59, crazed prospector

Jackson has lived alone in the ruins of the Spanish fort for several years, coming to understand and worship the thing in the lake. From time to time, Jackson traps and kills animals and throws their bodies into the water as offerings to his god.

When Smythe came to the fort, he found Jackson, and the two soon recognized their kinship in the worship of the god in the lake. Jackson is not involved in the bank robbery, nor do any of the other gang members know of him—Smythe intends to make introductions when everyone arrives at the lake.

Sgt. Thomas O'Neil, age 42, disgraced *ex-soldier and outlaw*

A cavalry quartermaster, O'Neil cooked up a scheme whereby some cattle rustlers of his acquaintance would supply the cattle and O'Neil would sell them to the U.S. Cavalry for good profit. When the scheme was discovered, O'Neil deserted but was then captured. While being taken to a military prison, O'Neil was "rescued" by Reverend Smythe and his followers. O'Neil liked the preacher's plan to rob the bank in Shade and gathered his rustlers together to help mount the venture.

O'Neil's rustlers have no idea of Smythe's ultimate plans, as none of them know anything about the mountain lake or the thing sleeping within its waters. They believe they are headed toward Smythe's hideout. The rustlers are only accustomed to killing when absolutely necessary, so when Smythe orders the murders of the Hobbes family and then abducts and sacrifices the Navajo villagers, the rustlers' faith in the preacher begins to wane.

O'Neil's Rustlers

Joined with Reverend Smythe's gang, O'Neil's associates are Arizona Hawkins, Ben Parks, Pedro Chavez, Jerry Hill, and the late, luckless Billy Stevens. Their profiles begin on page 120.

AFTER THE OUTLAWS

As the posse heads north out of town, Marshal Otis calls for the riders to see if they can find any fresh tracks. If the investigators fail a **Track** roll, Cliff Brennert notices a trail that suggests the outlaws are heading for **Hobbes' Farm** (following). At this point, George Martin urges his two men to hurry, so they can catch the varmints and save the Hobbes family, and despite Marshal Otis' calls for everyone to stick together, the two cowboys rush ahead.

Keeper note: if they wish to catch up with the two cowboys, investigators succeeding with a **Ride** roll are able to spur their mounts to race after Brennert and Williams—meaning that they arrive in time to see some of the outlaws departing the farm (see **The Fast Group**). Marshal Otis stays behind with the slower group, who all arrive too late at the farm to see the outlaws.

The Fast Group

Those riding ahead of Marshal Otis' group arrive at Hobbes' Farm just as Ben Parks and Manson Challot are riding away. Ask if the investigators wish to pursue the two outlaws; if so, a chase may begin (see **Chapter 7: Chases**, *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, and page 47 of *Down Darker Trails*). Remember, firing a weapon from horseback requires a combined **Firearms** and **Ride** roll.

CHASE QUICK REFERENCE

Use horse CON to determine **Speed** roll.

The Outlaw's Horses

CON:	60
Move:	11
HP:	19

Manson Challot

Ride:	30%
Handgun:	30% (15/6), damage 1D10+2
HP:	12

Ben Parks

Ride:	45%
Handgun:	35% (17/7), damage 1D10
Rifle:	35% (17/7), damage 2D6+1
HP:	13

The chase continues until both outlaws are dead, captured, or the posse gives up the chase or falls too far behind. Captured or slain outlaws obviously don't show up later in the adventure, so ignore their roles (if any) in future events.

Captured?

If captured, Manson Challot babbles incoherently about Reverend Smythe's "message," while Ben Parks pleads for his life, telling the posse everything they want to know—what happened at Hobbes' Farm (see following), who is riding with Reverend Smythe (Boston, Challot, Parks, Arizona Hawkins, Jerry Hill, Sgt. Thomas O'Neil, and Pedro Chavez), and where they're heading for in the mountains—the old Spanish fort.

Keeper note: Ben Parks doesn't know about Josey Jackson, and so does not mention his name in reference to the gang members.

THE HOBBS' FARM MASSACRE

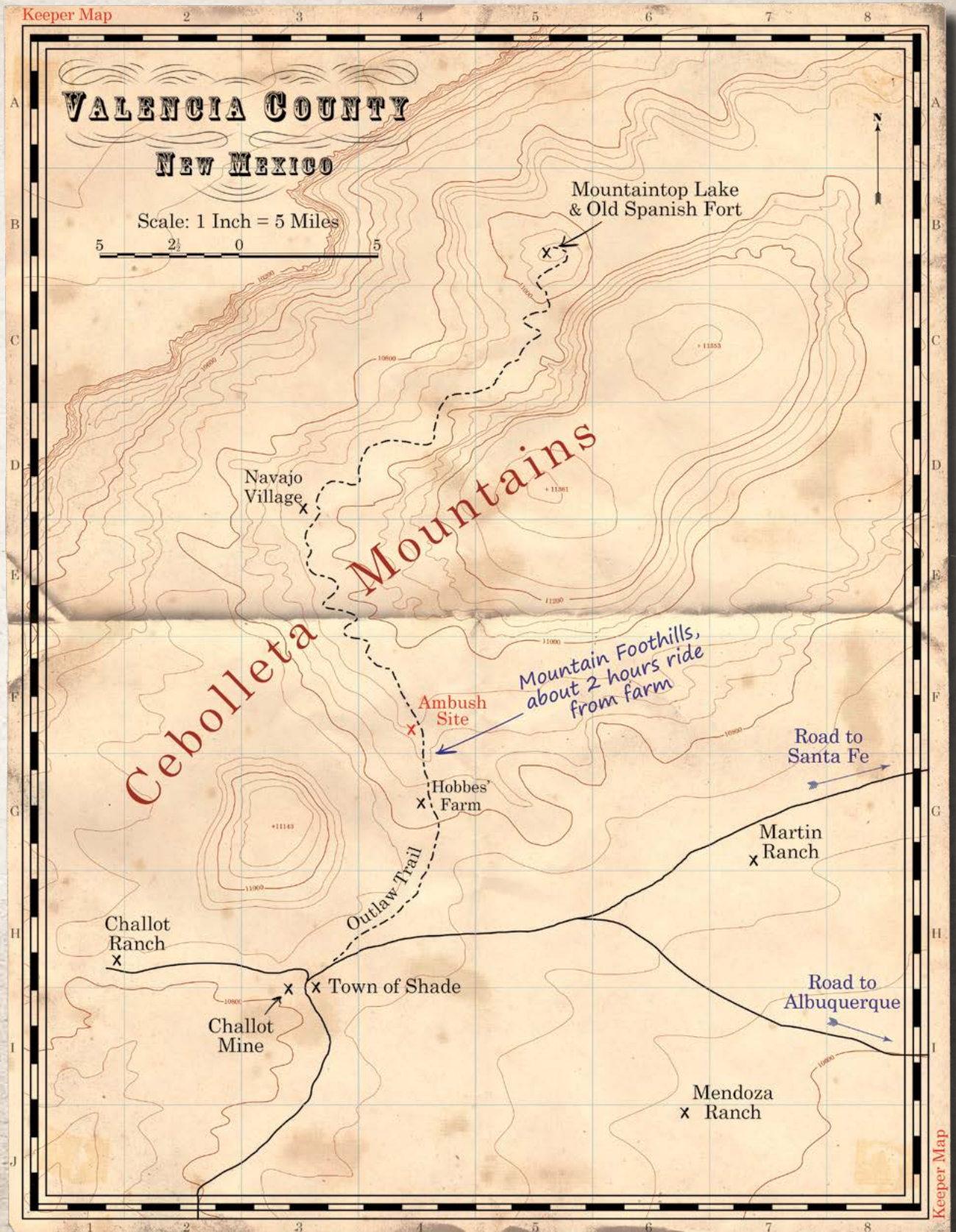
The farm is a shambles: furniture has been thrown through windows, livestock stumble around bleeding from dozens of stab- and slash-wounds. Pigs and chickens have been shot down in their pens. While the doors to the house are open, the barn doors have been barred shut from the outside.

Searching the Farm

Within the farmhouse, there is no sign of Hobbes or his family, although the place has been thoroughly torn up. Searching the barn reveals worse horrors: three Mexican ranch hands have been hanged by their necks from the rafters, their stomachs cut open, and their intestines left to spill out onto the floor. Frank Hobbes' two sons have been shot to death, his wife beaten and shot, while Frank has been crucified on the inside of one of the barn doors; crucified to the other door is Jerry Hill (one of **O'Neil's Rustlers**, see page 109). Painted in blood on the door next to Hill is a message: "*You shall not question the Lord your God.*" Nailed next to the painted message is Hill's severed tongue; the brush used to write the message lies on the floor nearby. Seeing the mass of brutality at the farm provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4+1 loss); if storeowner Jake Parker fails his Sanity roll, he walks outside and gets on his horse and rides back to town—no amount of persuasion can induce him to stay.

Keeper note: Marshal Otis or any of the other posse members can identify Jerry Hill as a local small-time crook who rides with a disgraced army sergeant, Thomas O'Neil, and his band of cattle rustlers.

BENEATH THE BURNING SUN



What Happened at the Farm

Surprisingly, Jerry Hill is still (barely) alive; a successful **First Aid** roll revives him. Unable to form words due to loss of his tongue, he can scribble messages if presented with paper and ink. Otherwise, if Ben Parks was captured, he can relate what happened at the farm.

On arriving at the farm, Reverend Smythe ordered his men to wreck the place and gather everyone in the barn. After hanging the ranch hands, Smythe turned his attention to the family, shooting Hobbes' sons. At this, Hill pleaded with the preacher to stop the killing, which only seemed to inflame the preacher more, causing Smythe to turn on Hill. Held by the other men, Hill was forced to watch as Smythe ordered the deaths of Hobbes and his wife, who then commanded the men to crucify Hill alongside the farmer.

Keeper note: if Manson Challot and/or Ben Parks were not captured, Hill can confirm that Smythe and his gang are headed for the old Spanish fort in the mountains.

Tough Justice

George Martin and his men insist that Hill and any other captured outlaws should be hanged immediately. Then, just as Marshal Otis attempts to calm the situation down, Cliff Brennert snatches the marshal's gun from its holster, leveling the weapon at the marshal and telling him to "calm down."

What do the investigators do? Any show of force is enough to get Martin and his men to back down; however, their next step is to leave the posse—unless the investigators wish to **Persuade** Martin and his men to stay.

Keeper note: if Martin and his men part ways with the posse, they return to Shade, where Martin gathers a force of 2D10+10 members of the Valencia County Ranchers' Vigilance Committee. On the posse's return, Martin intends to lay siege to the jail and remove any captured outlaws for some homegrown justice.

If the investigators intervene and save any captured outlaws from Martin's proposed lynching, they now have to decide what is to be done with the prisoners. If he hasn't already run off, Jake Parker could be left with them at the farm; otherwise, it will have to be an investigator or one of Martin's men, since Potts is desperate to get to the Navajo village.

If the lynching succeeds, Martin grins, saying "*court adjourned*," and has Brennert return the marshal's gun. Marshal Otis, at his wit's end, calls for a vote as to who's going to lead the posse: him or Martin. Potts sides with the marshal, while Martin's men vote for him; it's up to the investigators to cast a deciding vote—if the marshal loses, he is furious and returns to town.

It is late afternoon by this time, so the posse may wish to stay the night at the farm or press on for a few hours and camp in the wilds. If the party knows they're headed into the mountains they can salvage food and 1D4+3 canteens from the Hobbes place. Other canteens can be taken from Challot and Parks if they are captured.

AN AMBUSH

Approximately 2 hours' ride beyond Hobbes' Farm, the rocky foothills of the Cebolleta Mountains begin. As the posse continues forward, ask for a **Spot Hidden** roll to notice buzzards wheeling in the sky above, suggesting something may be amiss ahead. If the roll is failed, the investigators have no warning when Sgt. O'Neil and the gunslinger Boston ambush them.

If alerted, call for another **Spot Hidden** roll, with a bonus die, to detect movement in the rocky hills ahead; if failed, or the posse is not aware of potential danger, two pistol shots ring out: O'Neil's firearms skill is 50% (25/10) while Boston's is 75% (37/15), both causing 1D10+2 damage—if either is successful, have the bullets hit NPCs in the posse, rather than the investigators. If the ambushers are detected, the posse can get to cover before shots are fired; otherwise, diving for cover takes a round and forfeits any other action this round.

Assume both sides have cover among the rocks, adding a penalty die to attack rolls (in addition to range modifiers). The outlaws fire a few rounds before trying to slink back over the hill to their horses. Give each investigator a **Spot Hidden** roll to see O'Neil retreating, allowing a chance for a single shot at him without the benefit of cover. If he's hit, he throws down his gun and cravenly tries to surrender; however, on seeing this, Boston takes one round to try and shoot O'Neil before fleeing himself.

Keeper note: Boston should escape this encounter. If O'Neil is captured, he tells the posse Smythe is headed to the Spanish fort beside the lake in the mountains.

INTO THE MOUNTAINS

Now in the foothills, the posse continues to follow the outlaws' trail. Henry Potts, desperate to check on Lolotea, leads the way, as he knows the direction to the Navajo village and to the old ruins—if he is no longer with the posse, then Marshal Otis navigates.

The fort is three days' journey from the ambush site through dry, rugged terrain. While the posse probably has just enough water to survive, Potts advises they go via the Navajo village to fill up their canteens and give their horses a chance to drink

their fill too. The outlaws' trail seems to be headed that way anyway. No one disagrees, although a successful **Psychology** roll detects that Potts seems to have ulterior motives for wanting to go to the village. If pressed on this matter, Potts admits he wants to check on a "friend" there.

THE NAVAJO VILLAGE

Henry Potts is correct; the outlaws' trail does lead to the Navajo village, which lies one day's ride through the mountains, past the ambush point. Potts is also happy to tell everyone that the Navajo are quite peaceful and that he's visited the village before, so he doesn't expect any trouble.

The village is home to about 20 Navajo and consists of a dozen or so hogans and huts. As the posse approaches, Potts becomes concerned, as there's no one in sight. Riding closer, the posse begins to spot bullet-holes and blood marring the huts. Clearly, the outlaws did more than pass through here.

Keeper note: Reverend Smythe, with some difficulty, captured most of the Navajo residents and has marched them to the old fort to be sacrificed to the god in the lake.

Potts is distraught, scrambling to Lolotea's hogan and screaming in rage when he finds it empty. The village is deserted, although a successful **Listen** or **Spot Hidden** roll detects an old Navajo *bataalii* (medicine man) writhing about inside one of the huts. The sole survivor, the *bataalii* tried to stand up to Smythe and got shot for his troubles. Now, the old man lies slowly dying.

If found, the *bataalii* begins speaking in Navajo—Potts can translate; otherwise, if no one else in the posse can speak the language, they must make do with a Hard **INT** roll to try and guess the old man's meaning.

The old man, whose name is Tatanka ptečila ("short bull"), relates that the mad white man who dresses like a holy man came to the mountain with the man from the sea. They went to the lake and the false holy man spoke words of power over the lake and awakened a demon-of-many-tongues that had been dead for many years. Now, the mad white man has taken away all the people to feed to the monster and make it strong. Only by killing the one who awakened it can the demon-of-many-tongues be made to sleep again.

If Potts is present, Tatanka ptečila gestures to him, bidding him to bring one of the *jish* (medicine bundle) dolls arrayed



Speaking to Tatanka ptečila

on the floor of the hut. He says the dolls contain spirits of protection, and they will help Potts and his friends stop the false holy man. He tells Potts to keep the doll close to his heart, and it will protect him.

Keeper note: the gunshot wound inflicted on Tatanka ptecila is killing him and he dies soon after speaking unless an Extreme **First Aid** roll can be achieved.

The Jish (Medicine Bundles)

There are six *jish* in the hut; small dolls dressed in bits of cloth, feathers, and beads. A successful Anthropology or Lore (American Indian) roll recognizes them as fetishes representing beneficial spirits in Pueblo cultures. If Potts was present when the hataalii died, the *jish* dolls are “activated” because the old man recognized the schoolteacher as a friend. If Potts is not present, anyone who takes a *jish* doll receives its benefit only with a successful Luck roll—roll for this once, when its power is needed. Each medicine bundle doll is single use: working the first time its power is needed. Mechanically, a *jish* doll prevents the next successful attack on the bearer, whether it’s a bullet or an attack by the star-spawn; for example, the spawn’s tentacle recoils from its target at the last second or a gun jams instead of firing.

Village Provisions

There is plenty of water and food, and perhaps a few weapons or rounds of ammunition salvageable from the village.

Trail of the Outlaws

Departing the village and heading north further into the mountains are the moccasined footprints of many people, as well as a handful of riders. While the trail is easy to follow, a successful **Track** roll suggests the horse riders were leading the people on foot.

THE MOUNTAINTOP LAKE

It’s another two days’ ride to the old fort in the mountains. During the first day journeying toward the fort, the posse finds the corpse of an old Navajo woman beside the trail; she has been shot in the head (0/1 Sanity loss). That night, the posse hears bloodcurdling screams somewhere far in the distance, lasting more than an hour. The horrible cries provoke another **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss). Anyone trying to sleep should attempt a **POW** roll—refer to the dream descriptions as given in the **Bad Dreams** section, page 104, with the resultant Sanity loss.

Knowledge About the Spanish Fort

None of the posse members have been to the Spanish fort, but all are aware it exists and that it’s in ruins. Henry Potts and Marshal Otis heard that the ruins sit beside a lake, whose waters fill a crater on a mountaintop.

Following the Trail

The trail follows a narrow path that winds back and forth up a mountainside, eventually reaching the summit. At the foot of the mountain, the posse comes upon the corpses of five horses—more if O’Neil, Parks, and Challot escaped the investigators in the previous scenes.

Keeper note: Smythe ordered his gang to shoot the horses when they could take their riders no further up the steep mountain path. Indeed, the posse’s horses can go no further and must be tethered or set free, allowing the posse to proceed on foot.

The trek up the mountain to the Spanish fort takes approximately four hours; no rolls are required to follow the path taken by the outlaws. The route enters the eastern end of the summit’s crater, at a narrow pass partially blocked by crumbling stone walls, which once formed a guardhouse. The gates are missing, and despite the obvious ambush point, there doesn’t appear to be anyone around—a successful **Track** roll confirms that booted and moccasined feet passed this way recently. Climbing up on the ruins of the guard post, the posse can see the crater ahead, some 250 feet (76 m) long from east to west, and 200 feet (61 m) long from north and south. A lake takes up most of the southern half of the crater, while to the west another set of crumbling walls leads the way to more dilapidated structures on the far western side. Piles of rubble and boulders show where rockslides have spilled down from the steep walls of the crater. It looks like the only way in or out of the crater is the route the posse is following.

Various boulders and rockslides offer some cover as the posse enters the crater, but again, there is no one in sight. As they approach the lake, a successful **Track** or **Spot Hidden** roll discerns tracks at the water’s edge, and patches of blood in the mud and sand. Out in the lake float some curious objects; taking a closer look means spotting dismembered human arms and legs, a bobbing head, and strands of long black hair. It’s suddenly clear: these are the remains of the Navajo villagers, murdered, butchered, and cast into the lake. Call for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss). On discovering the remains, Henry Potts falls to his knees and cries out in anguish; the investigators must act quickly if they wish to prevent his cries alerting the outlaws—a successful **Psychology** roll enables an investigator to anticipate Pott’s frame of mind

BENEATH THE BURNING SUN

and act to quiet him down, requiring a successful **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate**, or **Persuade** roll.

Keeper note: of course, Smythe's gang knows the posse is on their trail, so it matters not if Potts' cries are heard; however, the investigators don't necessarily know that.

Another Ambush

After surveying the horror of the bodies in the lake, as the posse heads into the crater, following the path to the old ruins, three of Smythe's gang—possibly Jerry Hill, Arizona Hawkins, and Pedro Chavez, dependent on previous scenes—are hiding in the rubble and rocks just outside the crumbled stone wall that extends from the crater wall to the lake's shore. Allow a **Spot Hidden** or **Listen** roll to detect one of the ambushers; otherwise, the attack is a surprise.

The ambushers hold their fire until the posse approaches the outermost ruins, and then begins blasting away. At least

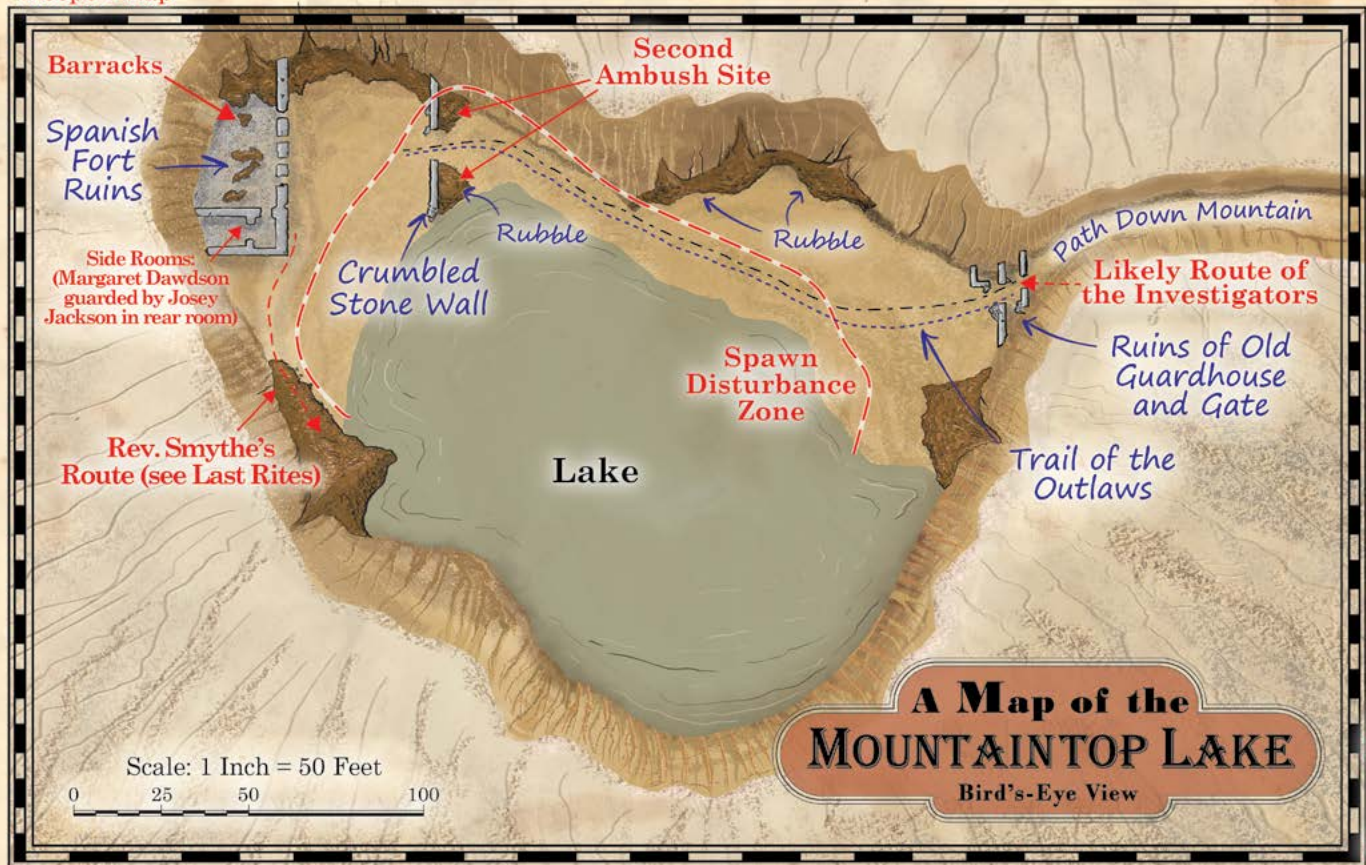
one of the gang is inside the "Spawn Disturbance Zone"—see the nearby **The Thing in The Lake** box for details.

During the fight, should two of Smythe's men be incapacitated or die, the third attempts to flee back through the outer wall to the ruins of the fort; of course, the posse may be forced to fall back as well. As the walls of the crater are too steep to climb safely (and anyone so doing would be exposed to the outlaws' guns), the investigators may try to make a dash for cover inside the outer wall, alongside the fort. A tense standoff may ensue, with the kidnapped Margaret Dawson's fate still unknown.

Keeper note: the second ambush assumes the posse is just heading straight into the ruins; however, if a stealthier approach is taken, with the investigators waiting until nightfall, they may avoid the ambush entirely. If waiting until nightfall, refer to the following section, **Last Rites**, which describe Reverend Smythe's actions during darkness.

Below: The mountaintop lake map

Keeper Map



Keeper Map

Last Rites

The first night the posse spends in or near the crater, Reverend Smythe ventures out in the darkness to the rubble pile on the western shore of the lake. There, he begins chanting a ritual to fully awaken the star-spawn. Investigators who heard the miner's ravings back in Shade (**Bad Dreams**, page 104), and who succeed in a **Listen** roll, recognize some of the same words being used now. The mutterings and incantations continue to rise in volume and fervor. Meanwhile, Smythe's men are posted in the ruins to provide protection.

Keeper note: adjust the event described above and the following narrative dependent on the actions of the investigators and the other posse members. If they assault the fort when they first arrive, they may be repulsed and have to fall back and regroup, possibly waiting till either nightfall or the next dawn to begin their next attack. If they attack during the night, have Smythe sneak out to conduct his ritual while everyone else is focused on the fight. An investigator may spot the preacher and be faced with the dilemma of choosing whether to dart from cover and try to get to the preacher.

THE THING IN THE LAKE

The lake is impossibly deep, extending far below into the mountain. In its inky depths sleeps a star-spawn of Cthulhu. If roused, the spawn rises to investigate, and should no offering be made, it attacks anyone on the shore. Whatever enchantments hold the spawn to this place, they limit its ability to travel beyond the crater—so investigators who flee the crater are safe. Despite Reverend Smythe's efforts so far, the spawn is not yet fully awake, and the enchantments still remain in place; thus, it is unable to use spells, and its attacks are somewhat clumsy. Should Smythe succeed in killing the entire posse, plus all of his own men, as well as Margaret Dawson, the spawn fully wakes and is able to free itself of the elder magics tethering it here.

Keeper note: the dotted line marking the "Spawn Disturbance Zone" on the maps of the lake (page 115) delineates the area where gunfire may alert the resting star-spawn. If a gun or explosive is discharged within this zone, call for a group **Luck** roll to determine whether the spawn rises to investigate—and destroy whatever caused the commotion. The spawn appears 1D3+1 rounds after such a disturbance, and its coming is heralded by a series of large bubbles bursting on the surface of the lake, followed by the rushing of the water as something big rises up from below.

When the spawn first rises it shows only its head and shoulders above the water, calling for a **Sanity** roll (1D3/1D10 loss). If the spawn doesn't register any targets in

its attack zone, it simply sinks back into the depths; however, should any targets be seen, it lurches fully out of the water, provoking a further Sanity loss of 1D3/1D10 points.

Keeper note: due to its enormous SIZ, attacks against the star-spawn gain a bonus die to hit.

Reverend Smythe, Josey Jackson, and Boston have all seen the star-spawn and are no longer affected by its appearance; the other gang members were shut inside the fort and warned not to watch when the Navajo villagers were sacrificed. Thus, should it make its presence known, roll **Sanity** for the rest of Smythe's men: if any go insane, choose or roll 1D4 on the following to determine what happens to them.

1. Attempts to flee the crater, back toward the pass to the east, ignoring any enemies who may be between him and the path down the mountain.
2. Stands his ground and attacks the horror, even to his own death.
3. Attempts to kill himself.
4. Attempts to hide, preferably in the fort, where he cowers and whimpers.

Pulp: for pulp games, having the star-spawn rise from the waters is pretty much a must-have situation, forcing the heroes to deal both with the outlaws and the monster in the lake.

BENEATH THE BURNING SUN

As the first rays of dawn crack the sky, a voice is heard shrieking from within the ruins—it is the gunfighter Boston saying, “*STOP! What are you doing? Stop it! You said you’d help me, but it’s getting worse! GODDAMN YOU! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?*”

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll sees the gunman striding out of the ruins toward the rubble on the western shore of the lake, the skin of his face a pale-green color, his eyes like orbs, and his features strangely changed. A **Listen** roll may discern Smythe’s voice, trying to calm down his henchman: “*It is the mark of the Lord you bear! You are the Chosen! Do not spurn his blessing!*” With this, the sound of a gunshot echoes through the crater and the waters of the lake begin to bubble and froth.

Keeper note: Boston is completely deranged, as the reverend’s chants have awakened the deep one taint in his blood. Boston strides toward Smythe and shoots him, with the preacher falling to the ground—fortunately the bullet passes through his left leg, so the wound is not fatal. Seeing Smythe fall down, Boston then turns to the rest of Smythe’s men, a gun in each hand, shooting to kill all of them—when he’s killed the outlaws, he goes after the investigators and the posse too. If no one is able to stop Boston, Smythe’s ritual, coupled with

the gunfire, causes the star-spawn to rise to the surface of the lake. In the resulting chaos, the spawn snatches up Boston and hurls him into the wall of the crater, leaving a bloody smear as his dead form slides down and vanishes beneath the waters.

If any of Smythe’s men are still alive, the appearance of the star-spawn, let alone Boston’s bullets, send them fleeing from the ruins and out of the crater—perhaps even running straight into the posse’s guns. Only Josey Jackson—still hidden in the fort and guarding the kidnapped Margaret Dawson—and Smythe remain. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll sees the wounded preacher crawling toward the fort. Once any potential targets have left the spawn’s zone of attack, it returns to the depths of the lake.

THE FORT

The Spanish fort was built into the walls of the crater and consists of a barracks area and two smaller side rooms. A rockslide has collapsed one end of the building, allowing access to the roof. Anyone clambering onto the roof must make a successful **DEX** roll to avoid the roof falling in, depositing them inside the fort and incurring 1D6 damage from the fall.



Last rites of Reverend Smythe

Keeper note: depending on the timing, the investigators may see a trail of blood from the rubble at the western shore leading into the barracks—the route taken by the wounded reverend, which ends in the rear side room.

The barracks area is littered with the outlaws' gear and the stolen money. An open doorway leads to the first side room, which contains some of Reverend Smythe's personal effects (see note below). Those entering this first side room, perhaps following the reverend's blood trail, draw the fire of Josey Jackson from the rear side room.

Keeper note: Reverend Smythe's personal items are simply his canteen, rations, and gear (his Bible is elsewhere). If desired, the Keeper could choose to plant items for seeding later adventures, perhaps a satchel containing papers or correspondence relating to a situation elsewhere, or a strange artifact with connections to Innsmouth.

Josey Jackson

Within the rear side room is Margaret Dawbson, tied and bound, and her guard, Josey Jackson—depending on the investigators' previous actions, the wounded Reverend Smythe may also be in here.

The room is littered with furs, rocks, and gnawed animal bones—Jackson has been living here for some time. The furnishings are minimal, pieces that Jackson has scavenged or stolen over time: a chair, a couple of tables, and a makeshift bed on which Margaret Dawbson is tied. Jackson has thrown over one of the tables to form a barricade, allowing him to fire through the open doorway on anyone entering the first side room. Jackson's rifle is a muzzle-loader, with a long reload time, but the table's cover provides a penalty die to the gunfire of intruders. If on the roof, an investigator can distract Jackson, drawing his fire while others rush the room.

The Preacher

While Jackson tries to hold off the posse, if Reverend Smythe has made it to the room, he takes Jackson's skinning knife and turns to his final task: flaying Margaret Dawbson alive! While the crazed preacher had planned to feed the girl and the rest of his men to the star-spawn once the posse had been dealt with, the situation changed dramatically when Boston unexpectedly turned against him, leaving his plan in tatters. It takes Smythe 6 rounds to do enough damage to Margaret Dawbson to kill her unless he can be stopped. As necessary, the flaying may be further delayed if Smythe uses spells (Breath of The Deep, Dominate, and Shrivelling) against the investigators trying to disrupt his task.

Those trying to shoot past Jackson to hit Smythe suffer a penalty die to their **Firearms** rolls, although one successful attack on Smythe is enough to stop him attacking Margaret Dawbson and sends him to seek cover beside Jackson, where he can cast spells at the intruders; neither of these two madmen surrenders without a fight, and they probably go down in a hail of bullets.

Treating Margaret Dawbson

If Margaret is rescued and assuming Smythe did begin to flay her flesh, she loses 5 APP per round it took to rescue her. A successful **First Aid** roll binds and dresses her wounds enough so she can travel, with an Extreme success restoring 5 points of APP. If **Medicine** is also used, another Extreme success also restores 5 points of APP.

Searching the Room

Beside the bed, on the second table, is Reverend Smythe's large Bible, its cover smeared in blood. Opening its covers, the reader discovers that the original pages have been torn out and nestled inside the covers is a copy of *To the Waters I Go*, a Mythos tome describing the worship and rites of certain strangely named aquatic entities (see box nearby).

What About the Star-Spawn?

The star-spawn's role in this adventure is left intentionally vague. Did Reverend Smythe's sacrifices awaken and release it from its prison in the lake? It's assumed the spawn was sleeping and bound here, awaiting the rise of R'lyeh and the resurrection of its high priest, Cthulhu. Smythe's machinations may have awakened it prematurely, but is it content to remain here, or does it seek its freedom? These issues are left for the Keeper to decide, although for pulp games it is recommended that the spawn plays an active role in the climax of the scenario.

If desired, a dire conclusion to the adventure sees the death of Margaret Dawbson as the trigger that releases the leviathan: the horror rises from the lake, water dripping from its wings as it climbs out of the crater and casts itself into the winds, flying off to who knows what destination. Such an escape should cost the investigators 1D10 Sanity points for allowing the thing to break free of its enchantments.

On the other hand, the investigators may wish to try to contain the thing somehow. Binding or warding spells might work, but it's unlikely the investigators have such knowledge—perhaps they will seek to find the correct rituals in their future adventures, allowing them to return to the lake to make sure the spawn's bindings are tightened.

OPTIONAL PULP CONCLUSION: THIS AIN'T OVER YET!

A few days have passed since the posse returned to Shade following their ordeal on the mountain. The mines have flooded with the recent heavy rain, which continues to fall, making a quagmire of the town's main street. The investigators sit in the saloon, listening to the piano player trying to brighten the mood. The other patrons are laughing, and carousing, while some come to ask the investigators about the shoot-out with the mad preacher Smythe. Then, all goes silent. All eyes turn to the man standing in the doorway.

Hands poised above the grips of his guns, it is the gunfighter, Boston. His thin frame is bloated, his bulging eyes stare out above a mouth too wide, and his neck pulsates from newly developed gill slits. Cast in the light of the saloon, the webbing between his fingers is clearly visible. Call for a **Sanity** roll for those who saw him die and now see this transformed travesty (1/1D4+1 loss).

"You... did this to me, as much as that damn fool preacher," he croaks at the investigator who shot him. "Outside... You and me... NOW."

If the investigator refuses the challenge, Boston draws anyway and then blasts away at the other investigators for another round or two before fleeing into the rain. If the investigator accepts the challenge, the two duelists step out into the rain-filled street, with the town watching the showdown from boardwalks and windows.

Ask the investigator to make an opposed **DEX** roll with Boston; whoever gets the best level of success wins the draw. If Boston kills the investigator, he attempts to ride off, defending himself if necessary as he flees. An escaped Boston may show up again sometime in the future.

Keeper note: use the alternative **Boston Resurrected** profile (page 124) for this scene.

CONCLUSION

In joining the posse and tracking down the bank robbers, the investigators have gained the respect of Marshal Otis (if still alive) and the townspeople. If Margaret Dawson was rescued, they also gain the friendship of the mayor, although if his daughter was severely scarred by Reverend Smythe, the mayor blames the investigators for not being quick enough to save his daughter. In the unlikely event that the posse returned with prisoners, George Martin and his vigilantes will want to string up the outlaws—do the investigators let mob justice rule? If Marshal Otis was killed, the town needs a new lawman. Valencia County could use some law and order if the investigators are interested.

The investigators also receive their posse money (\$25, or \$100 if Mayor Dawson upped the amount), and depending on the outcome, they also get the bounties for the desperadoes: \$500 for Boston, and another \$500 for the rest of the gang. In addition, grant the following rewards, as well as a development phase for surviving investigators.

- Saving Margaret Dawson: +1 Sanity point.
- Killing or capturing Reverend Smythe: +2 Sanity points.
- Killing or capturing Boston: +1 Sanity point; +2 if the optional conclusion is used.
- Killing or capturing the other gang members: +1D3 Sanity points.
- Sealing the mountaintop with explosives or some other way of containing the star-spawn: +1D6 Sanity points.
- Killing the star-spawn: +1D10 Sanity points (+1D20 if *Pulp Cthulhu*).

MYTHOS TOME: TO THE WATERS I GO

English, by Charles Westwood-Chater, 1802

Published in a limited run of 100 copies, *To the Waters I Go* contains the musings of an English cleric living in Anglesey in the 1660s. Partially a diary, the book records numerous dreams relating to the oceans, aquatic life, and lost civilizations, with specific reference to "the sea people," "Cthulhu," and "R'lyeh." Later, the book contains rituals and ceremonies in praise of "the divine gaze'rs who is't catch but a wink within the waves, whose endless slumb'r shalt cometh to an end and the w'rld shalt knoweth their likeness."

- **Sanity Loss:** 1D6
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** +1/+3 percentiles
- **Mythos Rating:** 12
- **Study:** 2 weeks
- **Suggested Spells:** Breath of The Deep, Contact Mother Hydra, Contact Star-Spawn of Cthulhu.

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

Characters are grouped by association; note that some include a Luck value and pulp talents for *Pulp Cthulhu* games, which can be ignored for *Call of Cthulhu*.

PEOPLE OF SHADE

Samuel MacCready, age 36, blacksmith

STR 65 CON 70 SIZ 75 DEX 60 INT 70
APP 60 POW 60 EDU 65 SAN 60 HP 14
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4
or rod of iron 1D8+1D4
.45 Colt revolver 30% (15/6), damage 1D10+2
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting 30%, Art/Craft (Blacksmith) 70%, Charm 30%, Intimidate 50%, Language (English) 65%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Natural World 45%, Psychology 40%, Ride 50%, Rope Use 35%, Stealth 40%, Throw 60%.

Seneca "The Philadelphia Mangler" Stamps, age 23, boxer

STR 85 CON 75 SIZ 90 DEX 65 INT 65
APP 60 POW 50 EDU 45 SAN 50 HP 16
DB: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 7 MP: 10 Luck: 25

Combat

Brawl 80% (40/16), damage 1D3+1D6
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Animal Handling 40%, Drive Wagon 40%, Fast Talk 40%, Intimidate 70%, Jump 45%, Language (English) 45%, Natural World 40%, Occult 25%, Psychology 55%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 50%, Throw 70%.

Joe Bergersen, age 41, barkeep

STR 50 CON 55 SIZ 70 DEX 55 INT 65
APP 50 POW 55 EDU 60 SAN 55 HP 12
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6 MP: 11

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3
10-g sawed-off shotgun (DB) 55% (27/11), damage 4D6+2/1D8
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting 60%, Charm 55%, Drive Wagon 40%, Fast Talk 60%, History 40%, Intimidate 35%, Language (English) 60%, Language (Spanish) 20%, Law 35%, Listen 60%, Occult 30%, Ride 35%, Sleight of Hand 55%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 45%, Throw 80%.

Lefty Jones, age 30, faro dealer

STR 55 CON 55 SIZ 60 DEX 60 INT 65
APP 55 POW 55 EDU 60 SAN 55 HP 11
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 11

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3
.41 derringer 30% (15/6), damage 1D10+1
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting 70%, Appraise 40%, Fast Talk 40%, Gambling 40%, Language (English) 60%, Language (Spanish) 10%, Law 25%, Listen 45%, Psychology 60%, Ride 40%, Sleight of Hand 50%, Spot Hidden 80%, Stealth 70%, Throw 30%.

Thomas McDonald, age 27, bouncer

STR 80 CON 75 SIZ 85 DEX 50 INT 60
APP 40 POW 55 EDU 50 SAN 55 HP 16
DB: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 7 MP: 11

Combat

Brawl 75% (37/15), damage 1D3+1D6
12-g sawed-off shotgun (DB) 55% (27/11), damage 4D6/1D6
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Animal Handling 40%, Climb 45%, First Aid 35%, Gambling 30%, Intimidate 70%, Jump 40%, Language (English) 50%, Mechanical Repair 35%, Navigate 30%, Psychology 60%, Ride 60%, Rope Use 45%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 50%, Throw 45%, Track 40%.

MISCELLANEOUS TOWNSPEOPLE OF SHADE

Use the following for miscellaneous townspeople, adjusting skills as desired.

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	55	50	65	40	45	65	60	55	70	80
CON	60	55	70	75	55	60	65	65	55	55
SIZ	65	55	50	65	60	65	65	70	65	80
DEX	45	55	65	50	55	60	65	60	70	50
INT	60	65	60	55	65	70	70	60	65	55
POW	50	45	55	45	60	60	55	45	50	55
APP	50	55	40	60	55	70	65	55	50	50
EDU	40	45	50	60	60	65	55	60	55	45
SAN	50	43	50	40	58	59	54	45	50	55
HP	12	11	12	14	11	12	13	13	12	13
DB	0	0	0	0	0	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4
Build	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Move	7	8	9	7	7	8	8	7	9	8
MP	10	9	11	9	12	12	11	9	10	11

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3+DB
 .36 Colt Navy revolver 35% (17/5), damage 1D10
 16-g shotgun (DB) 40% (20/8), damage 2D6+2/1D6+1/1D4
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Climb 65%, First Aid 45%, Intimidate 55%, Jump 50%, Language (English) 10%, Language (Chiricahua Apache Dialect) 60%, Listen 50%, Natural World 60%, Navigate 60%, Occult 20%, Ride 50%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 70%, Throw 45%, Track 70%, Trap 60%.

*#3-#5 each carry a .36 Colt Navy revolver and #6-#8 each carry a 16-g shotgun (DB).

Arthur McLeary, age 42, dime novelist

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 65 DEX 50 INT 65
 APP 55 POW 60 EDU 65 SAN 60 HP 12
 DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3+1D4
 .36 Colt Navy revolver 30% (15/6), damage 1D10
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Art/Craft (Pulp Novels) 65%, Charm 45%, Fast Talk 40%, History 40%, Language (English) 65%, Language (Spanish) 20%, Library Use 40%, Listen 60%, Natural World 25%, Navigate 40%, Psychology 50%, Ride 35%, Stealth 45%, Throw 40%.

Eddie "Snakebite" Fawson, age 39, crooked gambler

STR 45 CON 50 SIZ 55 DEX 70 INT 70
APP 55 POW 60 EDU 70 SAN 60 HP 10
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
or small knife 1D4
.22 S&W Model 1 revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D6
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Accounting 30%, Fast Talk 45%, Gambling 75%, Language (English) 70%, Language (Spanish) 20%, Ride 35%, Sleight of Hand 75%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 50%.

Jedediah "Arkansas" Cantrell, age 58, prospector, agitator

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 50 INT 65
APP 45 POW 65 EDU 50 SAN 65 HP 13
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 5 MP: 13 Luck: 30

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3
or medium knife 1D4+2
.44 Colt Dragoon revolver 65% (32/13), damage 1D10+2
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Drive Wagon 60%, Fast Talk 60%, First Aid 40%, Gambling 40%, History 60%, Intimidate 70%, Language (Dutch) 30%, Language (English) 50%, Language (Spanish) 15%, Listen 40%, Mechanical Repair 30%, Natural World 35%, Psychology 25%, Ride 60%, Rope Use 40%, Spot Hidden 35%, Stealth 30%, Throw 45%, Track 50%, Trap 50%.

Doctor Peaster, age 56, competent surgeon

STR 50 CON 70 SIZ 60 DEX 55 INT 70
APP 50 POW 70 EDU 80 SAN 64 HP 13
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 5 MP: 14

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3 or scalpel 1D4
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

First Aid 80%, History 45%, Language (English) 80%, Language (French) 30%, Language (Latin) 35%, Library Use 35%, Listen 35%, Medicine 70%, Natural World 35%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 45%, Science (Biology) 65%, Science (Chemistry) 55%, Science (Pharmacy) 60%, Stealth 35%.

THE POSSE

Marshal Hosper Otis, age 46, lawman

STR 70 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 60 INT 65
APP 60 POW 60 EDU 65 SAN 60 HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 12 Luck: 30

Combat

Brawl 45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
.45 Colt revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D10+2
.44-40 Winchester rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Climb 40%, Fast Talk 40%, Language (English) 65%, Language (Spanish) 30%, Language (Navajo) 10%, Law 40%, Listen 35%, Navigate 40%, Persuade 30%, Psychology 35%, Ride 40%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 35%, Throw 30%, Track 45%.

Henry Potts, age 24, schoolteacher

STR 50 CON 50 SIZ 75 DEX 60 INT 75
APP 75 POW 55 EDU 85 SAN 55 HP 12
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 11

Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3+1D4
.44-40 Winchester rifle 35% (17/7), damage 2D6+1
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Anthropology 15%, Climb 40%, Fast Talk 25%, First Aid 40%, Jump 30%, Language (English) 85%, Language (Navajo) 40%, Natural World 50%, Ride 35%, Science (Astronomy) 15%, Science (Biology) 20%, Science (Chemistry) 15%, Science (Mathematics) 40%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 45%, Throw 25%.

Jake Parker, age 38, store owner

STR 40 CON 50 SIZ 55 DEX 70 INT 65
APP 55 POW 45 EDU 70 SAN 45 HP 10
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 9

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
.44-40 Winchester rifle 30% (15/6), damage 2D6+1
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Accounting 45%, Drive Wagon 45%, Fast Talk 40%, Language (English) 70%, Persuade 45%, Ride 30%, Science (Pharmacy) 15%, Stealth 60%, Throw 25%.

George Martin, age 48, rancher and vigilante

STR 75 CON 60 SIZ 80 DEX 50 INT 65
 APP 45 POW 80 EDU 60 SAN 80 HP 14
 DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 16 Luck: 40

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
 .45 Colt revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D10+2
 .44-40 Winchester rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
 12-g sawed-off shotgun (DB) 45% (22/9), damage 4D6/1D6
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting 35%, Credit Rating 70%, Fast Talk 50%,
 Intimidate 60%, Language (English) 60%, Language
 (Spanish) 20%, Listen 40%, Persuade 50%, Ride 45%,
 Stealth 30%, Throw 35%.

Cliff Brennert, age 24, ranch hand and vigilante

STR 65 CON 65 SIZ 70 DEX 55 INT 60
 APP 45 POW 50 EDU 55 SAN 50 HP 13
 DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
 .45 Colt revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D10+2
 .44-40 Winchester rifle 55% (27/11), damage 2D6+1
 Dodge 27% (13/5)

Skills

Animal Handling 60%, Fast Talk 35%, Gambling 40%,
 Language (English) 55%, Listen 45%, Ride 55%, Rope Use
 60%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 50%, Throw 45%, Track 50%.

Ralph "Hoss" Williams, age 24, ranch hand and vigilante

STR 75 CON 70 SIZ 80 DEX 50 INT 55
 APP 50 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 50 HP 15
 DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
 .45 Colt revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D10+2
 .44-40 Winchester rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
 Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Fast Talk 40%, Gambling 30%, Language (English) 50%,
 Listen 45%, Navigate 40%, Ride 60%, Rope Use 50%, Spot
 Hidden 35%, Stealth 35%, Throw 60%, Track 50%.

SMYTHE'S GANG

Billy Stevens, age 18, hapless bank robber

STR 55 CON 65 SIZ 60 DEX 60 INT 45
 APP 70 POW 40 EDU 45 SAN 40 HP 12
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 8

Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3
 .44 Colt Army revolver 35% (17/7), damage 1D10+2
 10-g shotgun (DB) 40% (20/8), damage
 4D6+2/2D6+1/1D8
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Fast Talk 45%, Language (English) 45%, Psychology 25%,
 Ride 35%, Stealth 35%, Throw 35%.

Manson Challot, age 23, spoiled rich kid and outlaw

STR 55 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 55 INT 60
 APP 65 POW 50 EDU 55 SAN 50 HP 12
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3
 .45 S&W revolver 30% (15/6), damage 1D10+2
 Dodge 27% (13/5)

Skills

Climb 45%, Fast Talk 40%, Gambling 45%, Language
 (English) 60%, Ride 30%, Stealth 40%, Throw 40%.

Ben Parks, age 24, cattle rustler

STR 60 CON 65 SIZ 65 DEX 50 INT 55
 APP 55 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 50 HP 13
 DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
 .36 Colt Navy revolver 35% (17/7), damage 1D10
 .44-40 Winchester rifle 35% (17/7), damage 2D6+1
 Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Animal Handling 40%, Fast Talk 30%, Gambling 30%,
 Language (English) 50%, Natural World 35%, Psychology
 30%, Ride 45%, Rope Use 50%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth
 45%, Throw 30%, Track 35%.

Sgt. Thomas O'Neil, age 42, disgraced ex-soldier and outlaw

STR 65 CON 75 SIZ 80 DEX 60 INT 65
APP 65 POW 60 EDU 60 SAN 60 HP 15
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 12 Luck: 30

Combat

Brawl 70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4
.45 S&W revolver 50% (25/10), damage 1D10+2
.45-70 Trapdoor rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+2
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting 30%, Animal Handling 25%, Charm 40%,
First Aid 40%, Intimidate 45%, Language (Apache Dialect)
35%, Language (English) 60%, Language (Spanish) 25%,
Navigate 40%, Psychology 40%, Ride 70%, Spot Hidden
40%, Stealth 40%, Throw 35%.

Arizona Hawkins, age 33, cattle rustler

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 65 INT 60
APP 50 POW 60 EDU 55 SAN 60 HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4
.36 Colt Navy revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D10
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Charm 50%, Climb 60%, Language (English) 60%,
Psychology 40%, Ride 40%, Rope Use 50%, Stealth 45%,
Throw 60%, Track 35%.

Pedro Chavez, age 31, cattle rustler

STR 70 CON 70 SIZ 55 DEX 60 INT 55
APP 40 POW 50 EDU 50 SAN 50 HP 12
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 9 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
or large knife 1D8+1D4
.45 Colt revolver 45% (22/9), damage 1D10+2
.44-40 Winchester rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Climb 60%, Fast Talk 50%, First Aid 40%, Jump 40%,
Language (English) 40%, Language (Spanish) 50%, Ride
55%, Rope Use 60%, Stealth 50%, Throw 35%, Track 50%.

Joseph "Boston" Bishop, age 32, gunfighter and deep one hybrid

STR 70 CON 65 SIZ 70 DEX 60 INT 65
APP 35 POW 55 EDU 65 SAN 46 HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 11 Luck: 30

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
or medium knife 1D4+2+1D4
.45 Colt revolver (2) 75% (37/15), damage 1D10+2
.44-40 Winchester rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Pulp Talents

- **Ambidextrous Shooter:** no penalty on shots made with off-hand.
- **Quick Shot:** spend 10 Luck points to allow two bullets to hit target rather than one.

Skills

Climb 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 05%, Intimidate 60%, Jump
45%, Language (English) 65%, Psychology 35%, Ride 40%,
Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 35%, Swim 75%, Throw 35%,
Track 35%.

Boston Resurrected (undead), deep one hybrid gunfighter

STR 90 CON 80 SIZ 80 DEX 70 INT 65
APP 05 POW 60 EDU 65 SAN — HP 16
DB: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 8 MP: 12 Luck: 30

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 or 2 (rifle or 2 × handguns or 2 ×
melee)

Brawl 80% (40/16), damage 1D4+1D6
or medium knife 1D4+2+1D6
.45 Colt revolvers (2) 65% (32/13), damage 1D10+2
.44-40 Winchester rifle 40% (20/8), damage 2D6+1
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Pulp Talents

- **Ambidextrous Shooter:** no penalty on shots made with off-hand.
- **Quick Shot:** spend 10 Luck points to allow two bullets to hit target rather than one.

Skills

Climb 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Intimidate 70%, Jump 60%,
Language (English) 65%, Psychology 35%, Ride 35%, Spot
Hidden 50%, Stealth 35%, Swim 90%, Throw 35%, Track 35%.

Josey Jackson, age 59, crazed prospector

STR 80 CON 70 SIZ 80 DEX 60 INT 60
 APP 35 POW 40 EDU 45 SAN — HP 15
 DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 6 MP: 8

Combat

Brawl 45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
 or medium knife 1D4+2+1D6
 Wood axe 45% (22/9), damage 1D8+2+1D4
 .50 Hawken plains rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+4
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Fast Talk 60%, Language (English) 45%, Cthulhu Mythos 13%, First Aid 40%, Jump 50%, Listen 60%, Natural World 55%, Psychology 30%, Ride 25%, Spot Hidden 60%, Survival (Desert) 40%, Throw 60%, Track 50%.

Reverend Elijah Smythe, age 55, insane preacher

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 80 INT 70
 APP 50 POW 60 EDU 75 SAN — HP 13
 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6 MP: 12 Luck: 30

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3
 or riding crop 1D2
 .45 Colt revolver 30% (15/6), damage 1D10+2
 Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 25%, Fast Talk 70%, First Aid 35%, History 45%, Language (English) 75%, Language (Latin) 40%, Lore (Theology) 45%, Occult 35%, Persuade 65%, Psychology 50%, Ride 45%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 60%, Throw 40%.

Spells: Breath of The Deep, Contact Mother Hydra, Contact Star-Spawn of Cthulhu, Dominate, Shrivelling.

The Thing in the Lake, star-spawn of Cthulhu

STR 300 CON 250 SIZ 450 DEX 50 INT 90
 APP — POW 80 EDU — SAN — HP 70
 DB: +8D6 Build: 9 Move: 15 MP: 16

Combat

Attacks per round: 4 (tentacles or claws)

Fighting 50% (25/10), 8D6
 Dodge 25% (12/5)



SPELL: SEND DREAMS (VARIANT)

Use the following for the star-spawn's version of this spell.

- **Cost:** 5 magic points
- **Casting time:** 5 minutes

The star-spawn sends nightmares to those sleeping within a 50-mile (80 km) radius; the effect is general, although the spawn may target certain individuals known to it. Those affected should make a **POW** roll, with the level of success gained determining the severity (immersion) of the dream narrative. For example, a failed roll means the connection is stronger and the dream narrative is fully immersive and all the more real, with greater detail and specific content. Higher degrees of success mean the dream is not as vivid, reducing its power and effect.

The horrific nightmares experienced contain scenes or information concerning the Cthulhu Mythos, and carry associated Sanity losses; on waking, ask for a **Sanity** roll dependent on the level of success of the POW roll:

- **Extreme success:** no Sanity loss.
- **Hard Success:** 0/1 Sanity loss.
- **Regular Success:** 1/1D4 Sanity loss.
- **Fail:** 1D3/1D4+2 Sanity loss.

At the Keeper's discretion, those suffering the spell's effects may be able to recall the dream narrative and may gain 1D4 points of Cthulhu Mythos from the knowledge learned (one time).



Armor: 10-point hide and blubber; regenerates 3 hit points per round.

Spells: Breath of the Deep, Contact Deity (Cthulhu), Create Mist of R'lyeh, Send Dreams.

Sanity loss: 1D6/1D20 Sanity points to see a star-spawn.







STONEGARDEN, ARIZONA

A campaign locale for the Old West: Stonegarden, a mining town in Arizona, tucked away in the Coyote Mountains. This chapter provides an overview of the locale's history and its key people, as well as secrets, threats, and possible Mythos connections for Keepers wishing to base games in Arizona.

- **Population:** 1,400+
- **Location:** about 40–45 miles (64–72 km) southwest of Tucson, in the mountains just north of the Mexican border.

HISTORY

The valley region surrounding the town of Stonegarden was originally settled millennia ago by some of the earliest humans to cross the Bering Strait and migrate southward. Some of these early humans encountered a Mythos race (probably the *mi-go*), who taught them astronomy, astrology, and otherworldly physics and magic. These people built the observatory that gives Stone Garden Mesa its name. In time, the tribe either died off or traveled to new lands.

The next humans to settle the area were the early American Indians, known as the Hohokam, who built a small city of pit-homes near Stone Garden Mesa about 2,000 years ago. The Hohokam eventually abandoned the site; the eerie “stone garden” and an “evil presence” beneath the nearby mountain helped to hasten their departure, as well as the incursions of other predatory tribes (precursors of the Yaqui and Apache). The area remained desolate and abandoned until the early 1800s when the first prospectors began exploring the mountains in search of gold. A few small strikes were made, but there was more silver than gold

here, and with silver being much harder to process and worth less than gold, the region saw little development.

In the 1860s, a prospector named Kenny Sherwood discovered a huge silver strike within the mountain overlooking the site of the present-day town of Stonegarden. Sherwood sought outside investors to help build a mine, and one of these, an unscrupulous Chicago businessman named Victor Landon, eventually signed on. As the Criss-Cross Mine prospered, Landon began pushing Sherwood out of his own company, and in the resulting confrontation, “Big Vic” Landon shot Sherwood dead, hiding the body and concocting a story about Sherwood having sold his share of the mine in order to go to San Francisco to enjoy the fruits of his labors. Meanwhile, Landon expanded the operation, buying and developing another mine and then building a stamping mill to separate the silver and gold ore from the rock. By this time, other mines had opened in the area, drawing hundreds of miners and mill-workers to the booming town of Stonegarden.

Vic Landon now presides over a small empire, controlling most aspects of life in Stonegarden. He owns most of the mines, the stamping mill, the company store, several saloons, and has shares in many of the local businesses. Anyone looking to start a new business in town certainly needs Big Vic's blessing—he owns most of the land in these parts.

Nowadays, Stonegarden encompasses several mines, strung along the floor of a winding valley, with the Criss-Cross Mountain and its mine near its center. Over a thousand men are employed in the mines and the stamping mill. Most live in barracks and cheap housing, buying what they need from the Landon Company Store, while spending the rest of their wages drinking, gambling, and whoring

Opposite: The keeper and the observatory

in the town's dens of iniquity. The population is over 90% male, with very few families and spouses present; most of the women in town are whores or saloon girls, although there are some women working "honest" jobs in local businesses. Stonegarden is a very rough place, with a reputation as one of the most violent towns in the west. Unbeknownst to anyone in town, this violent atmosphere is caused, in part, by an ancient entity sleeping within Criss-Cross Mountain—some nameless spawn of the Outer Gods, whose presence causes or increases aggression in humans.

Despite its reputation, Stonegarden continues to expand as its mines prosper. More respectable businesses are starting to arrive, and with those businesses come families seeking the wealth and opportunity inherent in a booming mining town. In time, there'll be a need for a schoolhouse and the other facets of civilization. As the town grows, life here will surely settle down, leaving behind its rowdy and bloodstained history. But, for now, at least, it remains a scary place where life is cheap and honest folk lock their doors at night.

LOCATIONS

Locations in Stonegarden are divided into two subsections: mine locations and town locations. Note that profiles for key personalities, as well as some generic folk, are provided; where profiles are absent, the Keeper is free to devise their own sets of statistics. Note that certain characters have a Luck value and pulp talents for *Pulp Cthulhu*, which may be ignored for regular games of *Call of Cthulhu*.

MINE LOCATIONS

More than a thousand men are employed in the mines in the Stonegarden area. Most work in Vic Landon's Criss-Cross and Higher Arc Mines, but others labor in the smaller Lady Jane and Silver Heart Mines. The mines extend hundreds of feet deep into the surrounding mountains, where the men pound at deposits of silver and gold. The workers reach the mines via small elevators fitted with metal roofs to protect from falling rocks. In the steaming-hot shafts, the miners dig out ore-bearing rock, which is loaded into tracked mining carts and hauled up to the surface via the elevators. The rock is then transferred to ore wagons and hauled down to Landon's stamping mill. There, the rock is crushed down and mixed with water and quicksilver to form an amalgam, which separates the valuable ore from the worthless rock. The amalgam is heated, allowing the quicksilver to be poured off, leaving only the precious heavier metals. The stamping mill operates around the clock, with special times set aside

WELCOME TO STONEGARDEN

When the investigators first arrive in Stonegarden, they should witness an example of the violence that plagues the town. A suitable scene could arise from a dispute between two miners in the Landon Company Store. As the investigators ride (or walk) through town, shots thunder from inside the store, and seconds later a man stumbles out, followed by another man. Both are armed and trade shots in the street—investigators failing a **Luck** roll must attempt a **Ride** roll to control their spooked mounts, or, with a fumbled Luck roll, suffer 1D6 points of damage from a stray bullet. At least one bystander on the street should receive a glancing blow by a bullet, encouraging that bystander to join the fray. The investigators are free to join the chaos or flee. Others on the street quickly take shelter.

The fracas ends when one of the two original combatants is killed or knocked unconscious, which may be the result of investigator interaction or not. Marshal Norton and his deputies (see page 138) show up to disarm everyone and get to the bottom of things. Long story short, the two original quarrelers work at the Criss-Cross Mine and had a long-standing feud. Unless the investigators harmed any innocent bystanders (fumbled **Firearms** rolls, and so on), they are assumed to have acted in self-defense and are released. Investigators charged with any crime are arrested and held in the marshal's jail until they can be sent to Tucson for trial.

Keeper note: use the **Typical Miners** profile (page 133) for the feuding men and any involved bystanders.

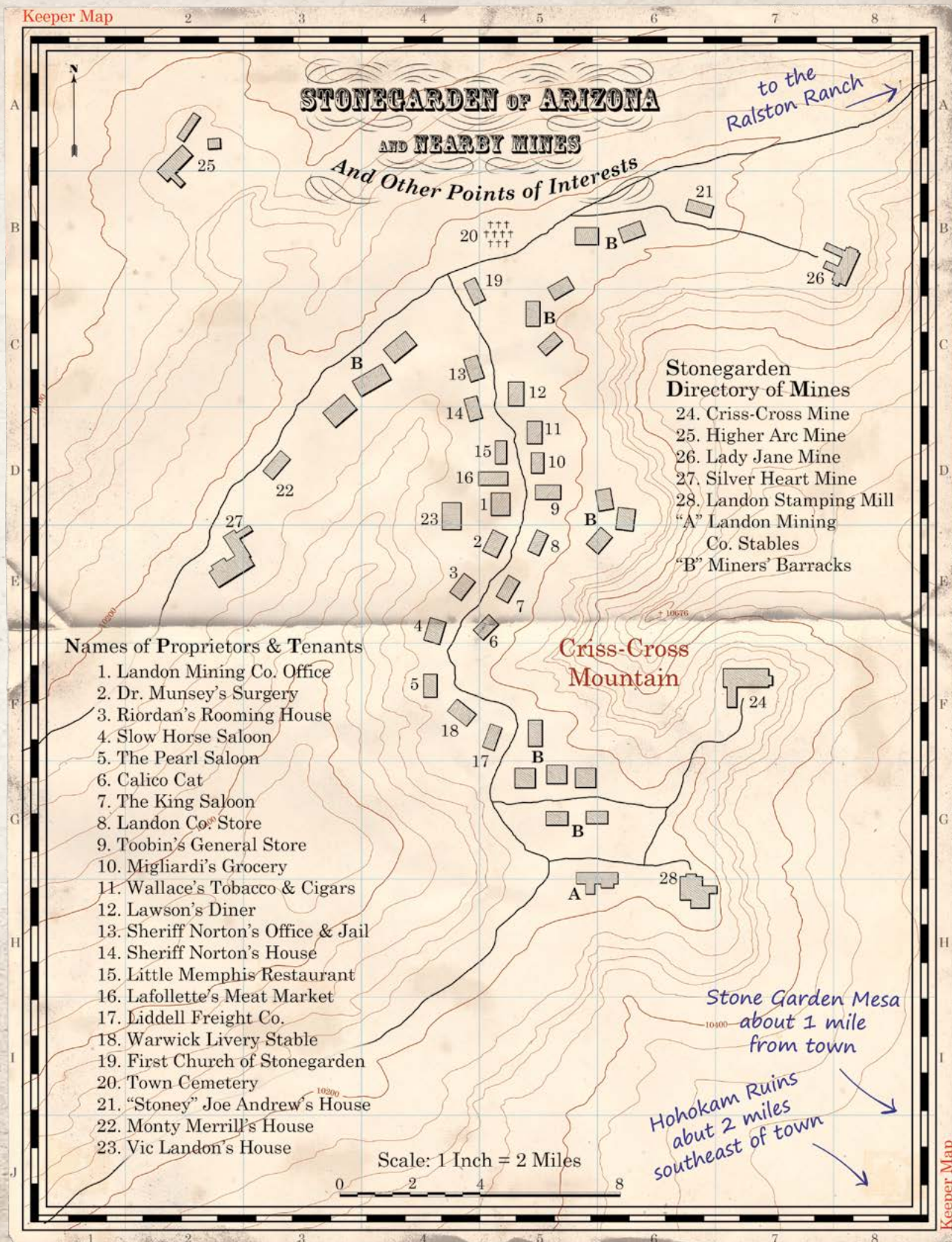
for the processing of ore from the Lady Jane and Silver Heart Mines to keep the output from these non-Landon-owned operations separate. The gold and silver are then separated and molded into ingots, then stored until they can be transported to Tucson via mule train.

Mine operations and associated industries employ almost 90% of the people living in Stonegarden, comprising miners, engineers, ore-wagon drivers, mill-workers, guards, muleteers, clerks, and a variety of ancillary workers.

24. Criss-Cross Mine

Situated on the eastern face of Criss-Cross Mountain, the mine is owned by Vic Landon, and is the largest and richest in the area, employing nearly half the workforce

STONEGARDEN, ARIZONA



in Stonegarden. Rumor has it that the mine is haunted, although the vast majority of miners only chuckle at such remarks (before taking another shot of liquor).

Keeper note: below the layers of mining tunnels lies the slumbering entity, whose presence afflicts the town and surrounding region (see **Larva of the Other Gods**, page 139).

25. Higher Arc Mine

Vic Landon's smaller mining operation, located in the mountains north of town, where silver ore is sought. Landon uses slightly cheaper Mexican labor in this mine; these miners are quartered in separate barracks positioned at the base of Criss-Cross Mountain.

26. Lady Jane Mine

Cut into the mountains west of town, this mine is owned by "Stoney" Joe Andrews. A couple of hundred men are employed, who gather silver and gold from a fairly rich seam.

27. Silver Heart Mine

Owned by Monty Merrill, the Silver Heart is the poorest of the mining operations, even though Merrill also uses cheaper Mexican labor. Produces only silver ore.

28. Landon Stamping Mill

Vic Landon's mill employs several dozen men who oversee the process of crushing down the rough ore, mixing it with various chemicals, and then heating it to separate out the pure gold and silver. A secure room inside the mill houses the processed bars of precious metals while they await transport to Tucson.

While the majority of time is devoted to processing ore from Landon's own mines, specific agreements are in place with the Lady Jane and Silver Heart Mines to devote certain times to the ore they bring in.

"A". Landon Mining Company Stables

Situated near to the Stamping Mill, the stables house around 40 mules along with their keepers. These are the mules used to haul the town's gold and silver to Tucson.

"B". Barracks

Scattered around the valley are several one- and two-story barracks or dormitories where many of the miners live. As many as 50 men live in each dormitory. No private rooms, just rows of cots or beds with the residents' personal items in locked trunks by their beds.

THE MINERS

The town's miners work long hours of backbreaking labor for \$1–\$2 a day in stifling conditions where minor accidents can prove instantly fatal. Surprisingly, given the size of the town's cemetery, there have been few serious accidents in the Stonegarden mines; the worst tragedy killed or injured only a handful of workers.

Most miners are desperate, filthy men who live virtually hand to mouth, spending their wages on drinking, gambling, and women. There are, however, a few seeking to build a grubstake to settle down, either here or elsewhere. Even the cleanest of these folk can never get all of the dirt from beneath their fingernails or the rock dust from out of their lungs. Theirs is a hard, harsh, unforgiving life, worsened by the rage-inducing proximity of the entity beneath Criss-Cross Mountain.

TOWN LOCATIONS

Refer to the nearby map of Stonegarden for the locations of the following premises.

1. Landon Mining Company

Vic Landon's mining company has its offices and records here, along with Landon's personal office. In the main lobby is a large topographical map showing the town, the mines, and much of the surrounding area for several miles in each direction (including Stone Garden Mesa and the American Indian ruins). A locked vault in the basement holds the company safe, which contains at least 1D10 × \$10,000 at any given time. Four shifts of four armed guards patrol the building at all hours.

Keeper note: should the investigators wish to search the company's records, the task requires 1D4 hours and a successful combined **Library Use** and **Accounting** or **Law** roll. Such an endeavor would have to be done illegally, as neither Landon nor his employees would countenance such a search. If successful, investigators note that there is nothing here to indicate a legal sale of Kenny Sherwood's share of the Criss-Cross Mine—the hidden truth is that Landon killed Sherwood and stole his shares in the mine.

2. Doctor Alfred Munsey

Munsey is in his late 30s but looks much older. His wife left him years back, so he migrated to the mining camps in the West, eventually settling in Stonegarden. Most of his patients are victims of mining accidents or the frequent brawling in the town; the endless carnage has driven Munsey to alcoholism.

Keeper note: Doc Munsey has First Aid 65% and Medicine 45%.

TYPICAL MINERS, AGES 15-55

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	65	60	70	65	60	75	70	80	70	85
CON	45	50	50	70	50	40	45	55	40	60
SIZ	65	70	65	75	65	75	80	75	70	80
DEX	60	70	45	50	65	55	70	50	60	60
INT	55	55	60	60	65	65	50	55	60	50
APP	55	40	45	50	60	50	45	60	55	50
POW	50	55	45	60	50	70	40	50	60	60
EDU	45	40	30	35	40	45	50	50	40	35
SAN	50	55	45	60	50	70	40	50	60	60
HP	11	12	11	14	11	11	12	13	11	14
DB	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D6
Build	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Move	8	8	8	7	8	8	7	8	8	8
MP	10	11	9	12	10	14	8	10	12	12

Combat

Fighting	75% (37/15), damage 1D3+DB or medium knife 1D4+2+DB
Club or pick axe	75% (37/15), damage 1D8+DB
.36 Colt navy revolver*	35% (17/7), damage 1D8
Dodge	40% (20/8)

*Miners have a 50% chance of owning a revolver.

Skills

Charm 30%, Climb 50%, Demolitions 25%, Fast Talk 40%,
First Aid 35%, Gambling 35%, Intimidate 45%, Jump 45%,
Listen 40%, Mechanical Repair 45%, Language (English**) 45%,
Language (Spanish**) 10%, Science (Geology) 45%,
Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 40%, Throw 45%.

**Reverse language skills for Mexican miners.

3. Riordan's Rooming House

An inexpensive rooming house for those not wishing to stay in the miners' barracks, as well as travelers and new arrivals seeking more pleasant lodgings, the business is run by Jake Riordan along with his small team of housekeepers and cooks.

4. Slow Horse Saloon

A rough establishment, lively and raucous, operated by Arty Swaftner. Usually, two bouncers (armed with sawed-off shotguns) sit above the floor level on the inner balcony to ensure trouble doesn't get out of hand. Swaftner is known to keep his own shotgun behind the counter and isn't shy of waving it around when trouble looms.

5. The Pearl (Saloon)

A favorite watering hole for the miners, this one is not quite as rough as the Slow Horse—only one bouncer here! The Pearl is owned and run by Jethro Mull, a boisterous Englishman, who when drunk enough likes to entertain his patrons with his musical skills on the flute.

6. Calico Cat (Brothel)

The 'Cat is a sleazy brothel run by Madame Gill, which does a brisk business every day of the week. Usually, there are eight prostitutes living and working here, although there are often a few more (increased by newly arrived women seeking their fortune). Two armed bouncers keep a watch on each of the building's two floors.

7. The King (Saloon and Gambling Hall)

The nicest saloon in town, run by Caesar Bruno; while the other joints have tables for poker and faro, The King has much more: roulette and girls who serve more than drinks if the price is right. Upstairs, above the main floor, is a suite of private rooms. Several armed bouncers patrol the place and live on site.

8. Landon Company Store

A large, well-stocked general store, with everything from clothing to foodstuffs, tools and other hardware—even a few common firearms. Robert Jessop and his domineering wife, Esther, operate the store for Vic Landon. Miners are allowed to buy goods on credit, which is then deducted from their wages. Non-employees are also welcome to buy, although requests for credit are refused.

Keeper note: at the Keeper's discretion, investigators asking for unusual or hard-to-find items of equipment need to succeed with a Hard **Luck** roll for the item to be in stock. Some equipment can be ordered in, if paid in full in advance, taking 3D6+6 days to arrive.

9. Toobin's General Store

Giles Toobin's store is smaller than Landon's but has more variety and slightly higher prices. Ladies wishing to purchase the very latest perfumes and cosmetics from the East Coast often frequent the store; someone seeking the local gossip may find Toobin's a veritable treasure trove of chatter.

Keeper note: at the Keeper's discretion, investigators asking for unusual items of equipment need to succeed with a Regular **Luck** roll for the item to be in stock. Items ordered in usually take 4D6+6 days to arrive.

10. Migliardi's Grocery

Ned Migliardi, his wife Fiona, and their 11-year-old son "Little" Ned run this family owned market. Prices are higher than at Landon's store, but the selection of food is far better, with lots of fresh produce, eggs, and meat. Unfortunately, the store is currently suffering from a rat problem.

11. Wallace's Tobacco and Cigars

Hank Wallace is an old friend of Landon's from Chicago, who was coaxed to open a shop here. Landon is his best customer, and Wallace is totally faithful to his old friend, going so far as to snoop and spy for him. At least once a week, Wallace heads over to Landon's house to spend the evening drinking and talking.

12. Lawson's (Diner)

This little diner, owned by Jackson Lawson, is popular with indiscriminating miners who don't mind low-cost food. The establishment consists of a basic kitchen with a serving hatch through to an even more basic dining room. The patrons usually wait their turn outside or in the hallway. Lawson lives on the upper floor. Each morning the wooden tables are packed with miners for breakfast, with the same men returning each evening.

13. Marshal Duke Norton's Office and Jail

Norton and his deputies operate out of this building. It's a simple affair, with a desk and a few chairs out front and a single jail cell at the rear, which can accommodate up to six people comfortably (more or less comfortably). A locked cupboard holds three .58 Springfield rifles, two .56 Spencer carbines, and various ammunition. See **The Law: Duke Norton**, page 137.

14. Duke Norton's House

Situated next to the jail, Norton's house is a single-story property. A bachelor, rumors abound about whether Norton is seeking a wife (or not).

15. Little Memphis Restaurant

The best eatery in town, serving sumptuous fare, run by ex-slave Atticus Thomas, his wife Ginny, and their three children. Despite it costing a little more, the food is good and attracts a slightly better class of patron than Lawson's diner.

16. Lafollette's Meat Market

Frank Lafollette sells fresh meat here, preparing and butchering the meat out back in a shed. Unfortunately, rats are proving to be a real pest.

17. Liddell Freight Company

Andy Liddell runs this company, which hauls goods in and out of Stonegarden, with stops as far as Tucson, Benson, and Phoenix. He commands a crew of six riders/drivers but is always on the lookout for good recruits.

18. Warwick Livery Stable

Stabling for horses and mules, with a few mounts for rental or purchase (prices tend to be high). Leeroy Warwick runs the establishment with a couple of stable hands.

19. First Church of Stonegarden

A small building on the outskirts of town, Vic Landon gave the land to Reverend Francis Carter to set up the church, as well as money for a church bell. Reverend Carter leads the town's small flock of parishioners. A true God-fearing man, he wishes to bring the Word of the Lord to the desperate souls of Stonegarden—he has much work to do.

20. Town Cemetery

The cemetery holds nearly 150 graves: most have wooden markers and crude crosses, although a few (containing the remains of wealthy) boast stone markers.

Keeper note: anyone who walks through the cemetery can attempt an INT roll to realize that there have been an inordinate number of deaths here for a town barely five years old—perhaps two or three times as many as might be expected. Asking around, it's clear that the majority of the deaths are due to violence rather than mining accidents.

21. "Stoney" Joe Andrews' House

Positioned down from the Lady Jane Mine, Andrews' house is a two-story building, with the main rooms on the ground floor acting as the mine's office, while Andrews' living quarters are upstairs. Andrews recently arranged for his wife, Heather, to relocate to Stonegarden, a move she has been less than enthusiastic about.

22. Monty Merrill's House

Monty Merrill, owner of the Silver Heart Mine, lives in this simple, single-story house with his housemaid, Maria, and his manservant, Carlos.

23. Vic Landon's House

Landon's hacienda-style house stands on the hillside west of town. Landon lives here with his bodyguard, Lewis McCoy; a Mexican cook/cleaning woman, Josefina Flores; and her husband, Javier, who drives Landon's carriage and tends to his horses. The sprawling, one-story house is decorated with expensive furnishings and features a long veranda overlooking the town. See **The Boss: Big "Vic" Landon**, following.

Keeper note: a stout safe is hidden behind a wall painting in Landon's well-appointed study. Inside are land deeds and at least 1D6 × \$10,000.

THE TOWN BOSS

Stonegarden owes its growth and prosperity largely to the efforts of Victor "Big Vic" Landon. Previously, Landon had been the unscrupulous owner of a textile mill in Chicago until his (even more unscrupulous) rivals drove him out of business. Landon packed up and moved west, investing in various mining companies, none of which proved fruitful. Then he met prospector Kenny Sherwood and things changed. Sherwood had discovered a rich strike in southern Arizona and needed a partner. Landon saw the opportunity and came aboard, slowly taking control of the burgeoning operation at Stonegarden.

When Sherwood eventually confronted Landon about losing control of his own company, the resulting argument saw Landon shoot Sherwood dead. Landon disposed of the body and spun a story of buying Sherwood out, with the latter heading to San Francisco to retire. No one has taken much interest in Sherwood's departure. The only person who arrived in town asking questions was Sherwood's brother Alan, who left town after a meeting with Landon—in reality, Landon had Alan murdered, with the body buried in the cemetery in an unmarked grave.

The Boss: "Big Vic" Landon

Landon wears expensive tailored suits; his expensive gold watch and chain bespeaks his wealth. He is seldom seen without a large cigar in his mouth and enjoys drinking fine whiskey. Big Vic holds court from his office and is rarely seen in public without his right-hand man, a well-dressed gunslinger known only as "Lewis." Should trouble flare, Landon has a loaded Colt Navy revolver in his desk drawer and usually carries a smaller Colt in his coat pocket.

CHAPTER 5

Landon is learning to be a successful businessman again, after years of desperation. Despite his desire to be respectable and to settle down with a pretty young wife, Landon has grown accustomed to getting his own way; certainly, his life experiences have instilled within him a ruthless streak that he still carries. He wants to grow Stonegarden but is reluctant to cede any of the power and influence he has established. Consequently, Landon tolerates the smaller mining outfits, although anyone who looks like they might become more serious competition is liable to be run out of town (or worse). Those who seek knowledge of Landon's past, the whereabouts of Kenny Sherwood, or who simply ask too many questions are likely to "disappear."

- **Description:** a stout man in his 40s, balding, with a thin mustache, usually in an expensive suit.
- **Traits:** bullish, domineering, and insightful.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** wishes to grow Stonegarden and thereby expand his wealth and power; will take measures to discredit and, if necessary, deal with (read, murder) those who seek to dig too deeply into his past.

VICTOR "BIG VIC" LANDON,

age 44, town boss

STR 60	CON 50	SIZ 75	DEX 55	INT 70
APP 60	POW 65	EDU 70	SAN 58	HP 12
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 6	MP: 13	Luck: 65

Combat

Brawl 55% (27/11), damage 1D3+1D4
or medium knife 1D4+2+1D4

.31 Colt Cloverleaf revolver 35% (17/7), damage 1D10+1

.36 Colt Navy revolver* 65% (32/13), damage 1D8

Dodge 30% (15/6)

**In office desk drawer.*

Pulp Talents

- **Sharp Witted:** able to collate facts quickly; gains a bonus die on INT rolls.
- **Hardened:** ignores Sanity loss for attacking humans and witnessing horrific injuries or the deceased.



"Big Vic" Landon and Lewis, his bodyguard

Skills

Accounting 60%, Credit Rating 80%, Gambling 45%, Intimidate 60%, Law 25%, Listen 35%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Navigate 30%, Persuade 55%, Psychology 50%, Language (Dutch) 55%, Language (English) 40%, Language (Spanish) 20%, Ride 30%, Science (Geology) 55%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 35%.

Lewis, *bodyguard*

Vic Landon's bodyguard and confidant, Lewis dresses in black and prefers silver accoutrements (watch and chain, hat- and belt-conchos). He wears a revolver with silver-plated grips at his left hip, and its match in a shoulder holster beneath his right arm (he's left-handed). His ice-blue eyes have the look of a killer.

Lewis doesn't say much to anyone other than Landon, and when he does it's usually to mock and sneer. The gunslinger has been at Landon's side since the latter left Chicago and has killed numerous men who tangled with his boss. Lewis has come to be a trusted aide, not simply a hired killer. He is well paid to take care of problems, and while he prefers to hire others to do the dirty work nowadays, he won't hesitate to fulfill his duties directly if required.

- **Description:** tall, lean, and long-legged, he dresses in black with silver trimmings. Long, graying sideburns and a thin, silver mustache highlight his often-sardonic smile.
- **Traits:** mocking, mean, and downright nasty.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** obeys Landon without question and tries to anticipate problems before they arise. It is the Keeper's decision whether enough cash could lure Lewis' allegiance from Landon.

LEWIS, age 41, gunslinger, Landon's bodyguard

STR 65 CON 70 SIZ 75 DEX 75 INT 70
APP 55 POW 70 EDU 55 SAN 53 HP 14
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 14 Luck: 35

Combat

Brawl 75% (37/15), damage 1D3+1D4
 or Bowie knife 1D4+2+1D4
.44-40 Remington rev. (x2) 85% (42/17), damage 1D10+2
Dodge 50% (25/10)

Pulp Talents

- **Alert:** never surprised in combat.
- **Quick Draw:** does not require firearm to be readied to gain +50 DEX when determining DEX order.

Skills

Credit Rating 46%, Fast Talk 40%, First Aid 45%, Gambling 40%, Intimidate 65%, Jump 60%, Language (English) 65%, Language (Spanish) 30%, Listen 70%, Navigate 40%, Psychology 60%, Ride 55%, Sleight of Hand 60%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 50%, Throw 45%.

THE LAW: DUKE NORTON

Despite being hired by Vic Landon, Duke Norton is not entirely in his pocket. Norton is a rough customer himself, and his pride and ego make it hard for him to bow to any man. Such attributes got Norton into trouble a lifetime ago, back when he was Bob Salmon, a soldier returned from the Civil War to his farm in Mississippi. When the Yankees tried to steal his land, he shot a couple of the "carpetbagging sons of bitches," earning himself a murder charge and a price on his head. Salmon fled and drifted west, took a new name, and found his skill with a gun and his no-nonsense attitude perfectly suited to law-enforcement.

In Stonegarden, Marshal Norton's law is harsh but fair. He gives fair warning and, if it's ignored, his first shot is to wound—after that, the gloves are off. He's killed two men in town (so far) in the course of his duties. He's also a master at the art of cold-cocking miscreants with the butt of his gun. Most men in town fear and respect the marshal, having seen him in action. Norton carries a revolver at all times but, if called to a fracas, he usually grabs his shotgun. He always wears a thick, sheepskin-lined vest, but seldom wears a hat.

There are still warrants out for the arrest of Bob Salmon: consequently, Marshal Norton is wary of strangers in town, especially lawmen and bounty hunters. If he can't get on their good side he'll try to run such folk off—or gun them down if necessary. Norton keeps his own law, and if Vic Landon needs someone arrested or tried, he'd better have a good case to get the marshal to fall in line. Norton prefers to stay out of Landon's schemes, letting the town's boss sort out his own problems.

- **Description:** leathery skin, creased by age and weather, he is just over average height and is well built. A trace of a scar runs down the left-hand side of his face (a reminder of the Civil War and his previous identity).
- **Traits:** hard but fair; finds it easier to subdue a troublemaker and then ask questions later.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** a wanted man with a secret past, he may view outsider investigators with suspicion and seek to run them out of town if he fears they are bounty hunters. Should any investigators create mischief in town, he will not hesitate to apprehend them.

MARSHAL DUKE NORTON (aka Bob Salmon), age 36, murderer

STR 60 CON 65 SIZ 70 DEX 65 INT 65
APP 50 POW 65 EDU 55 SAN 56 HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 13 Luck: 35

Combat

Brawl 70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4
or pistol whip 1D8+1D4
.45 S&W Schofield revolver 75% (37/15), damage 1D10+2
12-g sawed-off shotgun (DB) 55% (27/11), damage 4D6/1D6
Dodge 50% (25/10)

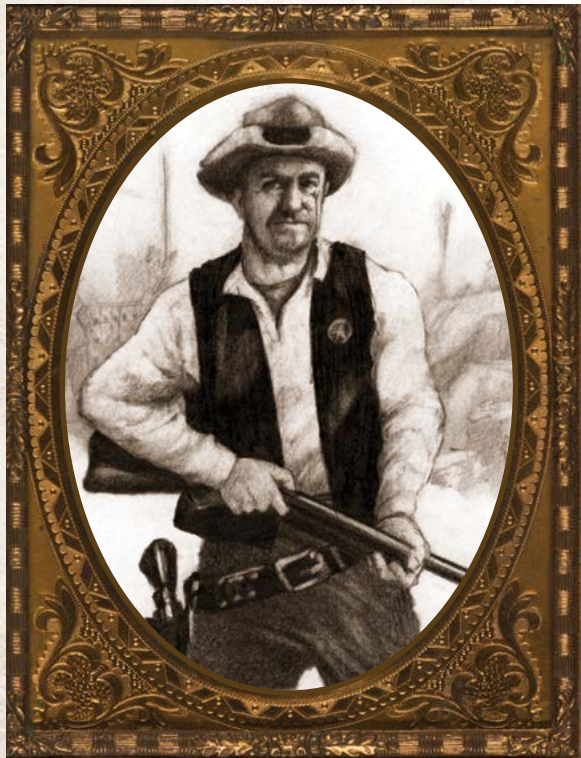
Pulp Talents

- **Fleet Footed:** spend 10 Luck points to avoid being outnumbered in melee for 1 round.
- **Rapid Attack:** spend 10 Luck points to gain one additional melee attack in a single round.

Skills

Credit Rating 35%, Fast Talk 65%, Gambling 55%, Intimidate 55%, Language (English) 55%, Language (Spanish) 20%, Law 25%, Listen 40%, Persuade 45%, Psychology 40%, Ride 55%, Sleight of Hand 50%, Stealth 55%, Spot Hidden 50%, Throw 50%, Track 40%.

Armor: 2-point sheepskin-lined leather vest.



(Vaughn) Von Hendricks, chief deputy

Marshal Norton's chief deputy is another rough customer: a former railroad worker, freight driver, and road agent named Von Hendricks. Hendricks is ruthless and formidable. The brutish deputy packs an old converted Colt revolver, and almost always carries his sawed-off shotgun on a lanyard around his shoulder. The miners in town are more afraid of Hendricks than they are of the marshal, as the latter usually gives a warning before he clouts somebody with his gun-butt; Hendricks is rarely so courteous. He has killed three men (so far) here in town.

- **Description:** tall and tough-looking, usually unshaven, and seldom without a wad of tobacco in his cheek. His clothing tends to be rough and weather-worn.
- **Traits:** quick to react and rarely hesitates before striking out.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** happy to follow the marshal's orders and to keep the peace by coming down hard on troublemakers. Is likely to remain firmly on Norton's side should the marshal's secret past be revealed.

VON HENDRICKS, age 29, chief deputy

STR 65 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 50 INT 65
APP 45 POW 55 EDU 55 SAN 46 HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 11 Luck: 27

Combat

Brawl 80% (40/16), damage 1D3+1D4
or pistol whip 1D8+1D4
.45 Colt Army revolver 45% (22/9), damage 1D10+2
12-g sawed-off shotgun (DB) 60% (30/12), damage 4D6/1D6
Dodge 40% (20/18)

Skills

Credit Rating 20%, Gambling 40%, Intimidate 70%, Language (English) 55%, Language (Spanish) 25%, Law 15%, Listen 35%, Persuade 35%, Psychology 35%, Ride 50%, Stealth 45%, Spot Hidden 45%, Throw 30%, Track 30%.

Steve Polk, deputy

Duke Norton's other deputy is a young hothead named Steve Polk, who aspires to be a famous lawman—and already has the arrogance for it. He swaggers about town, always eager to pull his gun to deal with any wrongdoing. Though he's winged a couple of drunks, Polk has yet to put a "real" notch on his gun. He spends what little he has on flashy clothes, and takes pride in his appearance. His wild streak extends to gambling, drinking, and whoring—he never pays for drinks, and has a steady girl, Florence, at the Calico Cat.

STONEGARDEN, ARIZONA

- **Description:** around average height but somewhat long in the leg, his clothing is clean and washed, much like his face. Bright blue eyes, bushy blond hair, and a winning smile.
- **Traits:** arrogant, charming, cocky.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Polk wants to make a name for himself, so can be somewhat reckless, volunteering for all manner of missions—he could accompany the investigators if he thinks there's fame to be had. His inexperience and arrogance are likely to be the death of innocents.

STEVE POLK, age 20, deputy

STR 70 CON 70 SIZ 70 DEX 50 INT 60
APP 70 POW 45 EDU 60 SAN 45 HP 14
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 9

Combat

Brawl 70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4
 or pistol whip 1D8+1D4
.45 Colt Navy revolver 40% (20/8), damage 1D8
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Charm 50%, Credit Rating 25%, Fast Talk 35%, Gambling 30%, Intimidate 70%, Language (English) 60%, Language (Spanish) 15%, Law 20%, Listen 50%, Psychology 30%, Ride 50%, Stealth 55%, Spot Hidden 50%, Throw 35%, Track 15%.

LOCAL LEGENDS AND GOSSIP

The following information is local to Stonegarden. Keepers should pick and choose which points are relevant to their campaigns, expanding upon and/or using these as inspiration.

- Hohtahtche and his Apache are holed up in the Coyote Mountains. They've been raising hell with prospectors and travelers, and supposedly following the mule trains to Tucson too. May have to call down the army to root them out of there.
- Most folks won't go up to Stone Garden Mesa. Weird lights have been seen up there at night, and a few prospectors have seen and heard things as well, like strange animal sounds and singing or some-such. Even the Yaqui say it's haunted.
- Those old ruins out there, past Stone Garden Mesa, have been empty for a long time. Some folk say they're haunted but that's just old wives' tales.
- Ted Underwood and Johnnie Pierce were coming back from their claim south of town and said they saw the biggest damn bird they'd ever seen flying way overhead. Blocked out the sun, it was so big.

- If you wanna know anything at all about what's going on in this town, Ma Ralston and her clan are the ones to ask. I don't know how they do it, but there ain't much that goes on in this town that they don't know about.
- Some of the workers in the Criss-Cross Mine say it's haunted. Some say they hear voices down there, and shadows move real strange like. Some say it's "tommy-knockers"—you know, spirits deep in the ground.
- Marshal Norton is wanted back in Mississippi for killing a damn Yankee who was trying to buy his land for a plug nickel. A reckoning is sure to come one day, and if he's ever caught, he's gonna hang for sure.
- Big Vic ripped off that two-bit local prospector Kenny Sherwood for his claim.
- You don't want to cross Big Vic's hired gun, Lewis. They say he worked for Vic in Chicago, and any folk who crossed Vic were never seen again, thanks to Lewis.
- They say Stonegarden is one of the most violent towns in the West, what with all the fights and killings and all. The old prospectors say some Indian put a curse on the town a long time back and it's sure stuck.
- There's an awful lot of rats in this town.

CTHULHU MYTHOS AND OCCULT FEATURES

LARVA OF THE OTHER GODS

The investigators should come to notice that Stonegarden is a place where folk are quick to anger and violence. Though there are rumors that the Criss-Cross Mine is haunted, no one knows or suspects the true cause of the animosity suffered in these parts. Deep beneath Criss-Cross Mountain, an immaterial entity sleeps, as it has slept since the Earth was young. The entity is a larva of the Other Gods, spawned by some alien monstrosity in the depths of space and spewed forth into the universe. In times past, it lodged itself in the still-cooling surface of the Earth and for untold eons it has lain here, dreaming and festering. When the first men came to the region, they felt its presence. Primitive humans turned against one another and blood was spilled. So it has been since then: first primitive humans, then the Yaqui and Apache, and now the townsfolk of Stonegarden.

The entity's aura causes aggressive behavior in humans—this is especially true of those who venture into the Criss-Cross Mine, which lies closer to the creature's actual resting place under the mountain.

Assume that each day spent down in the Criss-Cross Mine requires a Hard **POW** roll: if failed, the individual is affected by the entity's psychic influence. On the surface, those spending the day in the town of Stonegarden require a successful Regular **POW** roll to avoid the effect. In the main, the effect of a failed roll is heightened curtness or surliness to other people, while a fumbled result means a more violent reaction, such as feeling the need to start a fight (be it with fists, knives, or guns). The Keeper is advised to secretly advise players of this growing feeling of animosity or simply frame and depict events in such a way as to trigger annoyance from the investigator (i.e., setting them up to behave in a contrarian manner).

After a few days, an unaffected investigator might be asked to make a **Psychology** roll to recognize the change in attitude of a fellow investigator or another person known to them before they came to Stonegarden.

Unless the Keeper feels otherwise, there is little the investigators can do to combat or fight the larva of the Other Gods beneath the mountain. It's big, powerful, and

deep down. Perhaps an Elder Sign or another magical ritual might lessen the thing's power or reach. The investigators may explore the Criss-Cross Mine, perhaps led there by strange dreams or insights from other sources, digging down in search of the cause of the town's aggressive behavior. When it comes time for the entity to be born into the world, what disaster will be wrought? Presumably, once free the thing will not stay long before taking to the stars. If the investigators can't stop it, the best they could achieve would be persuade everyone to leave town—not a particularly easy task! Maybe they could dynamite the mountain? Of course, such actions would not sit happily with Big Vic Landon or with the miners who will lose their livelihoods.

STONE GARDEN MESA

Most residents of Stonegarden know that the town is named after a series of curious constructions on the mesa southeast of town, lying between the town and the old American Indian ruins—the mesa can be seen from the higher elevations of Criss-Cross Mountain. Like the old ruins, Stone Garden Mesa is thought to be haunted: some who have braved the mesa have reported strange lights, sounds, and glimpses out of the corners of their eyes of unearthly creatures.

The mesa-top is less than 1 mile (1.6 km) long and half a mile (800 m) wide, and is almost perfectly flat. Only a handful of scattered shrubs and cacti grow in the rocky soil. Voices seem oddly hollow on the mesa as if the speakers were indoors rather than under the open sky.

The place gets its name from the scattered pillar- and pylon-like stones that seem to form rows or clusters, as if in organized patterns. The stones vary from a few inches tall to twice the height of a man. Some of the stones are carved with strange symbols and what appear to be numerical markings. Even a successful **Anthropology** cannot identify these markings, but a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll might hypothesize that creatures predating human civilization made the carvings and placed the stones.

Another curious feature of the mesa is the myriad lines cut into the hard ground, crisscrossing the area, often aligned with one or more of the standing stones. Though often obscured by blown and drifting sands, these lines appear to have been first gouged into the earth many, many centuries ago. A successful **INT** roll makes the deduction that someone (or something) must be clearing away the sand and re-cutting the markings so as to maintain their shapes, but whether this is a recent activity or some centuries old "tradition" is unknown. A successful **Science (Astronomy)** roll suggests some of the lines and the stones markings appear to coincide with or represent the annual solstices as well as star movements.

PULP: PSYCHIC POWERS, NIGHTMARE DREAMS

Instead of behaving aggressively with a failed **POW** roll, investigators or others with psychic powers might instead suffer terrible nightmares caused by the proximity of the entity under the mountain.

In the dream, shaggy, fur-clad humans arrive in a valley overshadowed by a tall mountain. Soon the humans begin to fight each other with weapons made of stone and bone, inflicting horrible and bloody wounds. The scene changes, with the arrival of American Indians, who also proceed to fight one another with bow, spear, and ax, man after man, tribe after tribe. Then the prospectors come, followed by the miners, and the rage continues. Graphically violent scenes play in the dream: a fist in the eye, a knife to the belly, a bullet to the brain, and so on.

The first time this timeless procession of conflicts is experienced it provokes a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 loss), while subsequent dreams cost 0/1 Sanity each. An investigator who succeeds with a **Cthulhu Mythos** or Extreme **POW** roll after having such a dream can recall an unhealthy foreboding as if "something" were watching these conflicts from deep underground.

STONEGARDEN, ARIZONA

The Truth About Stone Garden Mesa

Stone Garden Mesa is an ancient observatory built by advanced humans nearly 15,000 years ago. They benefitted from "accelerated evolution" resulting from their interaction with the Fungi from Yuggoth (i.e., the mi-go experimented on the humans). These alien beings taught the early humans the secrets of the stars and planets before they departed the area. In time, human sorcerer-priests built the stone garden to track celestial movements. Eventually this group of advanced humans died off, though some of its sorcerer-priests attained immortality and journeyed elsewhere into the world—and the universe.

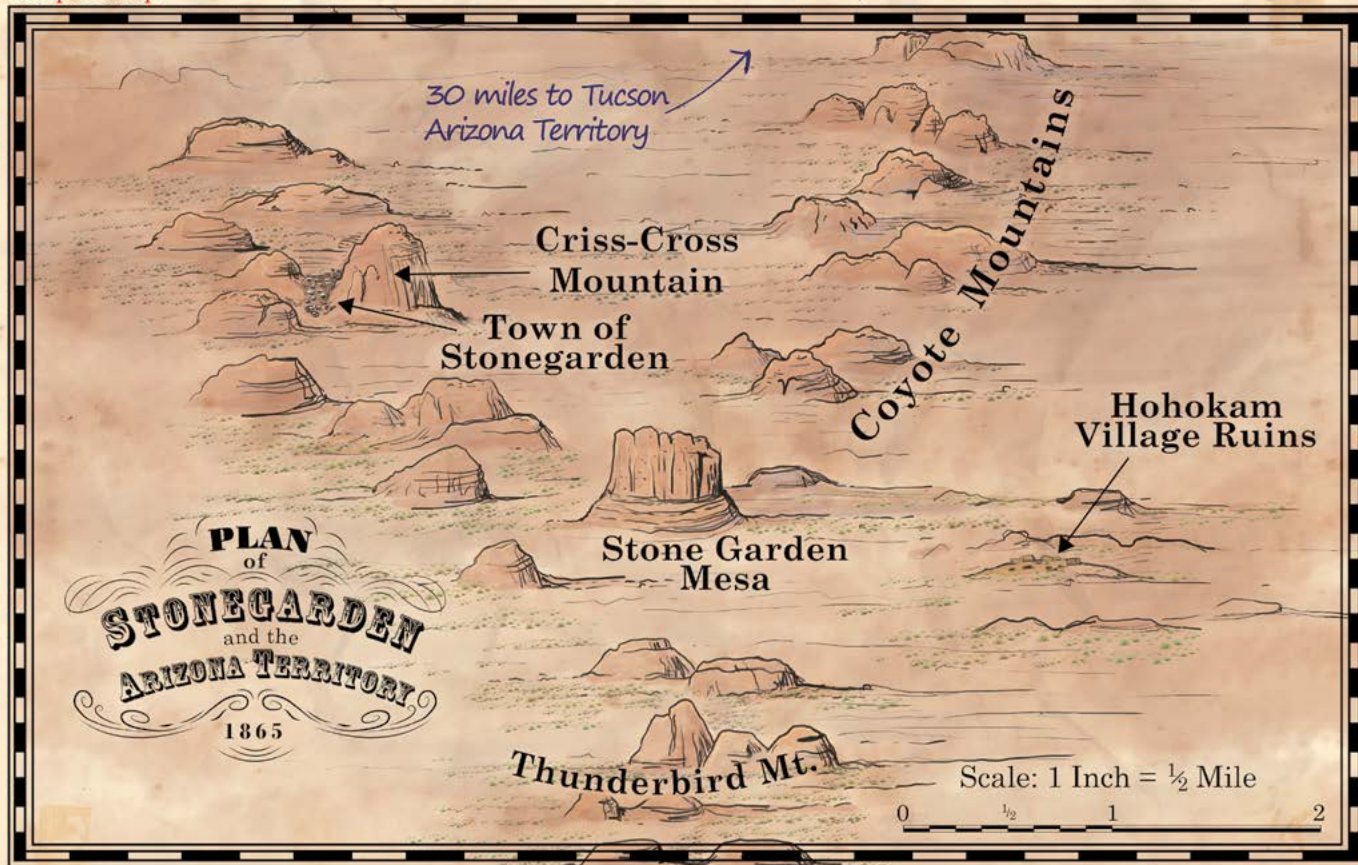
One of these deathless creatures returns to Stone Garden Mesa to use and maintain the ancient observatory. No longer human, this creature is best described as akin to one of the crawling ones: the soul and essence of the deceased sorcerer now inhabiting the thousands of grave worms and insects that devoured its corpse. This impossibly ancient crawling wizard has traveled the world and the cosmos but is

somehow compelled to return to tend the ancient stones and lines. Its exact motives for visiting the mesa are left for the Keeper to determine, but it probably won't react favorably to intruders or anyone who molests the observatory.

The "caretaker" is a powerful sorcerer (see profile following), who carries the **Staff of Yog-Sothoth** (see box nearby), and is usually accompanied by a star vampire, which serves as its guardian and mount. While visiting the area, the crawling one dresses in a tattered and shapeless hooded robe to hide its appearance—a man-shaped mass of wriggling things. It speaks no known human language, only a guttural and gurgling alien tongue. If pressed, the caretaker may drop the robe to reveal its true form, counting on the shock to paralyze its foes while it attacks or escapes. While it travels upright on two legs most of the time, it also occasionally slithers across the ground as a writhing mass and is able to disappear *en masse* through tiny cracks and holes in the mesa. When visiting the area, the caretaker lairs in the **Hohokam Ruins** (see page 143).

Below: Stonegarden environs map

Keeper Map



Keeper Map

The Keeper can use Stone Garden Mesa in a variety of ways, from a bizarre puzzle to perplex the investigators to a nightmare encounter with the caretaker. Visitors might find the mesa eerie but uneventful, or they may witness some bizarre magical or astronomical aberration—perhaps the opening of a Gate or an eclipse seen by no one else on Earth. Something may come through a Gate, or the vision beyond the Gate may be of some beautiful or terrible sight. Weird lights may bring the investigators to the mesa, where they encounter the caretaker going about its strange work. Perhaps a traveler stumbles into town, babbling about what he has seen on the haunted mesa, or the time is drawing near for more of the caretaker's kind to return for some great sorcerous undertaking.

STAFF OF YOG-SOTHOTH

A powerful magical artifact partially imbued with the omnipresent cosmic energy of the Outer God Yog-Sothoth. It is a five-foot (1.5 m) long piece of irregularly shaped, silvery wood. The wielder can use the staff as a means to access or find Gates, and as a weapon.

When used in connection with a Gate, the staff operates as per the spells Find Gate (ignore magic point cost) and View Gate (ignore magic point and Sanity cost, but apply Sanity losses for what may be seen). In addition, when the user passes through a Gate, the magic point cost of travel is halved (round down, but always costs at least 1 point).

As a weapon, the user mentally chooses a target and expends magic points, with the staff channeling this energy into a silvery-green bolt of corruptive energy that strikes the target causing terrible wounds. The staff's powerful bolt has a base range of 100 yards (91 m). The wielder must succeed in a **POW** roll to hit the intended target, with each magic point expended inflicting 1D6 damage. In addition, those damaged by the staff's bolt supernaturally age by a like number of years (thus, if the bolt delivers 8 damage, the target also ages 8 years). Anyone successfully struck by a bolt must succeed with a **CON** roll or permanently lose 1D10 points of CON; if this roll is fumbled, the target permanently loses 1D10 POW as well.

Note that should the staff's wielder fumble the POW roll to operate the staff as a weapon, their life energy is partially sucked into the artifact, aging them 1D6 years per magic point expended. The staff has 8 armor points and 6 hit points; if broken, the staff cannot be repaired and is of no further value.

THE CARETAKER, *crawling one*

STR 50 CON 80 SIZ 65 DEX 60 INT 100
APP — POW 120 EDU — SAN — HP 14
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 24

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1

Crawling ones can use weapons as humans do; however, they prefer to use spells or their minions to undertake physical tasks.

Disintegrate: at will, a crawling one can drop its human-seeming form, turning rapidly (1 round) into a pile of individual worms and insects to escape a threat.

Spell use: if the caretaker has foreseen an attack (having previously cast Augury), its actions are premeditated; assume it has cast Circle of Nausea to provide protection, followed by summoning either its star vampire or a servitor of the Outer Gods. If an attack happens without foreknowledge (no Augury), the caretaker may respond with Bind Enemy or Fist of Yog-Sothoth to limit/negate the opposition, and then cast Mindblast or Power Drain. If required, it will Create Gate to extricate itself from a messy situation, or failing that, disintegrate to make a quick escape through the ground.

Staff of Yog-Sothoth: see box nearby.

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage 1D3 or by weapon
Staff of Yog-Sothoth	120% (60/24), damage 1D6 + aging per MP invested (see box).
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 75%, History 90%, Occult 65%, Science (Astronomy) 95%, Science (Physics) 80%, Spot Hidden 80%, Stealth 70%.

Armor: none, but normal weapons deal minimum damage, while bullets cause 1 point damage; shotgun pellets cause minimum damage.

Spells: Augury*, Bind Enemy*, Bless Blade, Chant of Thoth, Circle of Nausea*, Command Ghost*, Contact Servitor of the Outer Gods, Create Gate, Fist of Yog-Sothoth, Journey to the Other Side*, Mindblast, Power Drain*, Summon/Bind Star Vampire, View Gate, Voorish Sign.

Sanity loss: 1D3/2D6 Sanity points to see the caretaker's true nature fully revealed.

*Spell may be found in the Greater Grimoire of Cthulhu Mythos Magic.

STAR VAMPIRE, *invisible servant and steed*

STR 130 CON 60 SIZ 120 DEX 40 INT 50
 APP — POW 70 EDU — SAN — HP 18
 DB: +2D6 Build: 3 Move: 6/9* MP: 14

*Flying.

Combat

Attacks per Round: 3 (talons, seize then bite)

Invisible: attackers suffer a penalty die to hit. After it has fed, a star vampire remains visible for six rounds, while the fresh blood metabolizes into a transparent equivalent. While it can be seen, attacks can be made at a normal chance to hit.

Seize (mnvr): once a victim is seized, on the following round, the star vampire can use its bite attack to drain the victim of blood.

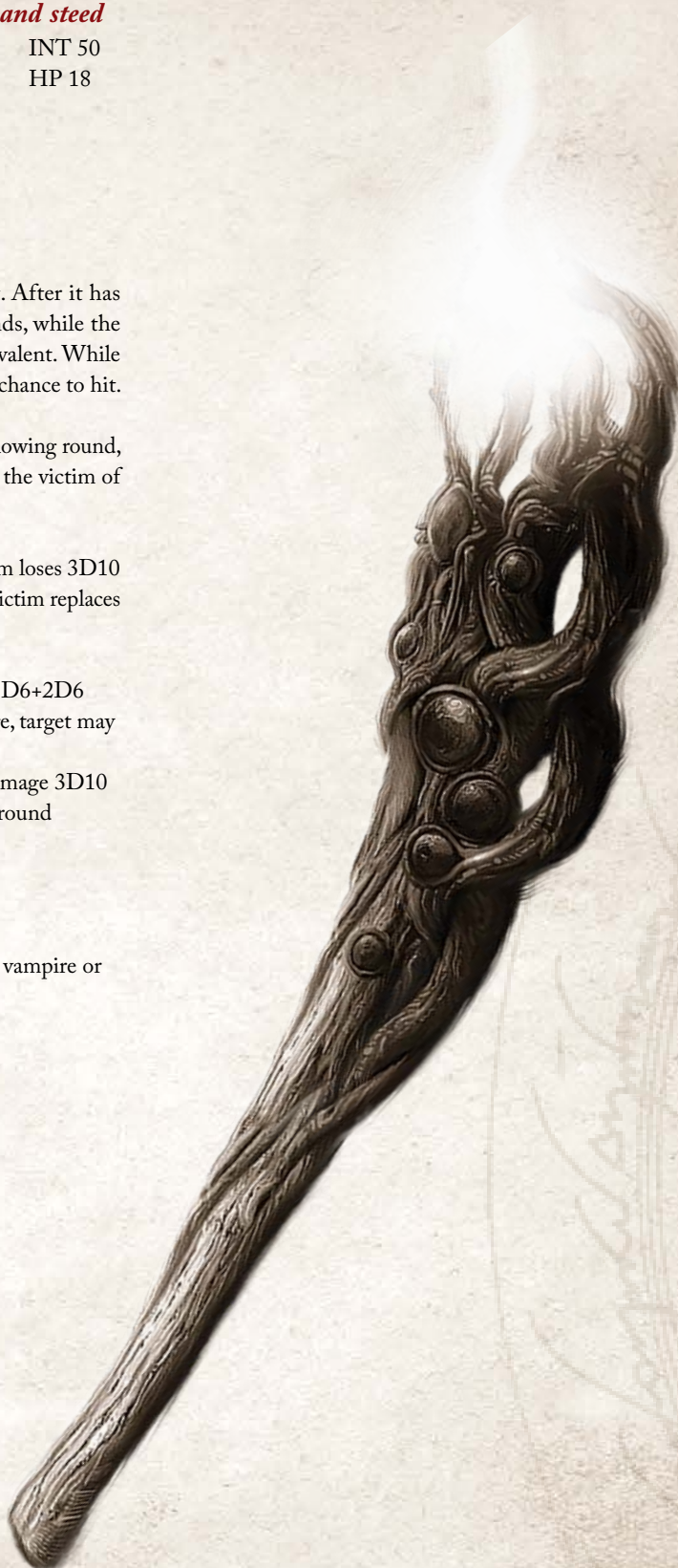
Bite: (can only be used on a seized victim) victim loses 3D10 STR per round, as blood loss. If not killed, the victim replaces this loss quickly, in three days or less.

Fighting	45% (22/9), damage 1D6+2D6
Seize (mnvr)	45% (22/9), no damage, target may now be bitten
Bite (if target seized)	Automatic success, damage 3D10 STR blood drain per round
Dodge	20% (10/4)

Armor: 4-point hide; bullets deal half damage.

Spells: none.

Sanity loss: 1/1D10 Sanity points to see a star vampire or experience its attack if invisible.



The staff of Yog-Sothoth

HOHOKAM RUINS

Approximately 2 miles (3 km) southeast of Stonegarden, beyond Stone Garden Mesa, are the ruins of a Hohokam village in the desert. Unlike most American Indian dwellings in the region (pueblos, cliff dwellings, or gatherings of wickiups or hogans) this village is made up of pit-homes: holes dug in the ground and covered with frameworks of thatch and/or sod. There are about two dozen such homes here, scattered across 250 acres (101 hectares), with only a couple of collapsed stone walls and above-ground buildings to indicate the area is anything but desert. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll can detect traces of grooves or troughs in the ground near the village, while successful **Navigate** or **Track** rolls can follow these troughs to an old, long-dry creek-bed, suggesting they were used for irrigation.

The ruins are caked with debris and wind-blown sand. Each home in the ground consists of two to three rooms, with some rooms on lower levels than the main floor. Most of the roofs are gone or collapsed into the pits below long ago, with sand and debris now blown over them, covering practically everything. A few of the ladders used to climb down into the subterranean houses are still intact, although anyone attempting to use one should make a **Luck** roll to see if it breaks, causing the person to fall some 12 feet (3.6 m) and suffer 1D6 damage—a successful **Jump** roll halves this damage.

A successful **Anthropology** roll surmises that these homes were abandoned several centuries ago, perhaps even more than a thousand years ago. Those searching the ruins (successful **Spot Hidden**) may discover artifacts, such as pottery, simple turquoise jewelry, rotted clothing, weapons, and ceremonial gear, while an **Anthropology** roll may identify such items as belonging to the Hohokam, a very early American Indian culture.

Keeper note: any American Indian investigators will recognize the Hohokam site. Such characters will also recall that the Hohokam are referred to as “the used up” or “vanished ones.”

The Deep Chamber

Once the investigators have explored three or four of the homes, the next one they enter contains a series of ladders into chambers deeper than the rest (**Luck** roll to check ladders do not break). After descending three levels down from the ground level, a fourth ladder can be found leading to a passageway, which in turn extends into a large circular chamber. Within the dark chamber are a central fire pit and a small *kiva* (worship pit). The walls of the chamber are covered with carvings of man-like figures mostly engaged in farming, hunting, and other mundane activities. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notes that one section seems to depict this village (and its walls, irrigation ditches, and so on) with several landmarks shown around it.

The Landmarks on the Wall

To the northwest is a space shown studded with upright stones connected by lines (Stone Garden Mesa). Shown farther northwest, beyond the mesa, is a mountain with a strange circular pattern beneath it (this depicts the evil entity sleeping beneath the mountain; see **Larva of the Other Gods**, page 139). Southwest of the Hohokam village is a series of mountains, and carved above these mountains is a large bird. A successful **Anthropology** roll may identify this as a Thunderbird of American Indian mythology (see **Thunderbird Mountain**, page 144).

Further Notes About the Site

At the Keeper's discretion, there may be magical artifacts found within the ruins, especially the Deep Chamber. Suggested items could include ancient clay pots containing drugs that cause strange dreams or visions, items helpful in summoning Mythos creatures, or devices offering protection from such creatures, and so forth. Perhaps insight gained through strange dreams or visions can help to determine some of the unusual places or things in the local area, and possibly also help to combat or dispel them.

American Indians and Stonegarden residents alike shun the Hohokam ruins, as the area is believed to be haunted. Those few who have ventured into the ruins have (so far) found nothing of value. The caretaker of Stone Garden Mesa usually resides in the ruins during its infrequent visits, along with its star vampire companion. Renegade American Indians or outlaws could also hole up here from time to time, trusting to the bad reputation of the place to ensure their privacy.



PULP: PSYCHIC DREAMS

Heroes with psychic powers who sleep in the Deep Chamber have unsettling dreams of the figures painted on the walls. The dreams feature the everyday life of the Hohokam community, as well as glimpses of the “Thunderbird,” the entity beneath the mountain, and/or the peculiarities of Stone Garden Mesa and its ancient users.

Such dreams provoke a **Sanity** roll upon waking (0/1D3 loss). However, the dreamer only recalls the details if a successful Hard **POW** roll is made. Failing the roll recalls only that the dreams were disturbing.



THUNDERBIRD MOUNTAIN

Thunderbird Mountain is located some 5 miles (8 km) south of Stonegarden and is home to a winged beast: a shantak from Earth's Dreamlands, which entered this world thousands of years ago through a Gate on Stone Garden Mesa. This huge, ancient, and dragon-like creature boasts weird markings on its wings and body. The creature's lair is a hidden cave at the top of the mountain, from which it occasionally ventures forth to answer some sorcerer's summons or to prey on unwary travelers. Over time, the appearance of the shantak has given rise to the belief that it is a Thunderbird, a legendary creature from American Indian folklore.

One of the valleys at the foot of Thunderbird Mountain is littered with the countless bones of animals, horses, buffalo, and men. Perhaps not just bones lie here—if the Keeper wishes, there might be a few meager valuables or artifacts to be found among these bones (rings, jewelry, gold nuggets, money, weapons, and so on). More bones can be seen scattered up the mountainside.

Ascending to the mountain's summit is not an easy task; without good rope and equipment, it's an Extreme **Climb** roll (Hard if properly equipped). Such a journey would take several hours (at least) to reach the summit, where the creature's cave is located. A failed Climb roll indicates that an impasse of some sort has been found, requiring the investigator to backtrack and find another route up. A failed pushed roll could mean a fall (anywhere from 1D6 to 10D6 damage, depending on the height achieved and the Keeper's discretion—a kind-hearted Keeper might allow a **Jump** or **Luck** roll to break the fall and reduce damage); a fall into a ravine or gully, trapping the investigator until they can climb out or be rescued; or that they have somehow alerted the shantak to their presence.

Even while climbing the mountain, the shantak could soar out of its cave to seek food and snatch an intruder off the mountainside, dashing them to the earth far below or returning to its lair to eat them alive. If the investigators were able to reach the creature's lair, they would find many thousands more bones and bodies scattered within, and perhaps more valuables (the fabled "treasure of the Thunderbird" may or may not be true), such as bags of gold, Spanish treasure, or a magical artifact, as the Keeper desires. The shantak could play a cunning ploy and leave its lair, allowing intruders to climb up and enter, so it could trap them within.

Apache and Yaqui occasionally see the "Thunderbird" in the skies, and a few know the general direction it has been seen to travel. Some have even seen the valley of bones and returned to tell of it, but no one has dared to try and track the beast to its lair. As such, these peoples have a healthy respect for the creature.

THUNDERBIRD, *ancient shantak*

STR 220 CON 80 SIZ 300 DEX 50 INT 30
APP — POW 60 EDU — SAN — HP 38
DB: +5D6 Build: 6 Move: 6/18*MP: 12

**Flying.*

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (wing strike, claw, bite)

Bite and hold (mnvr): uses a bite attack to grab hold of target prey, allowing automatic bites on following rounds. Target may attempt to escape with DEX or STR roll opposed by the shantak's STR (if shantak is harmed during this time, it may release its prey, at the Keeper's discretion).

Fighting	70% (35/14), damage 1D6+5D6
Bite and hold (mnvr)	70% (35/14), damage 2D6+2, held for 1D6 damage per round
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Skills

Listen 45%, Spot Hidden 80%.

Armor: 9-point hide.

Spells: none.

Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see this ancient and monstrous shantak; 0/1 Sanity points to hear its bizarre cry.

THE RALSTON FAMILY

The Ralston family lives on a ramshackle ranch beyond the edge of Stonegarden, where they raise cattle and pigs. The buildings are rundown, with sagging doors, broken windows, and badly weathered boards. The residents are Ma and Pa (no one knows their real names), their children Dannie and Ellie, and a mad old crone they call Gran. Ma and Pa are in their 40s, Ellie is in her late teens, and Dannie, who has an intellectual disability, is in his mid-20s; Gran looks to be, at least, in her 70s. All are uneducated, crass, and dirty creatures, dressed in filthy, well-worn clothing, although Ellie makes some effort to clean herself up and wash her clothes. Wily Ma does most of the talking to strangers, while Pa backs her up with a shotgun when necessary; Dannie tends to grin and keep out of the way but can break bones if called upon; Ellie uses her wiles to attract suitors; while Gran sits and rocks in her chair, cackling occasionally, although she has a knack for creeping up on folks unexpectedly (Stealth 80%).

The Ralstons make a meager living selling milk and pork in town, and Pa sometimes goes prospecting, but the family has another, weirder source of income, namely blackmail. The Ralstons have an uncanny ability to ferret out the secrets of

THE RALSTONS, BLACKMAILERS

	<i>Pa</i>	<i>Ma</i>	<i>Ellie</i>	<i>Dannie</i>	<i>Gran</i>
STR	60	55	50	70	60
CON	65	60	60	70	55
SIZ	85	60	55	75	50
DEX	50	55	70	50	45
INT	60	65	55	35	55
APP	45	45	65	35	40
POW	50	55	45	35	40
EDU	35	45	40	30	40
SAN	34	38	46	25	15
HP	15	12	11	14	10
DB	+1D4	0	0	+1D4	0
Build	1	0	0	1	0
Move	6	6	8	7	4
MP	10	11	9	7	8



The Ralston family

THE RALSTONS, BLACKMAILERS

Pa

Fighting 70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4
or large knife 1D8+1D4
12-gauge shotgun (DB) 45% (22/9), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Animal Handling 45%, Climb 40%, Credit Rating 15%,
Drive Wagon 55%, Fast Talk 35%, Intimidate 60%, Listen
60%, Mechanical Repair 45%, Natural World 55%, Occult
20%, Psychology 30%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 40%,
Throw 60%, Track 35%.

Ma

Fighting 60% (30/12), damage 1D3 or club 1D6
12-gauge shotgun (DB) 40% (20/8), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Climb 30%, Credit Rating 15%, Drive Wagon 45%, Fast
Talk 60%, Listen 70%, Mechanical Repair 35%, Natural
World 45%, Occult 20%, Persuade 55%, Psychology 40%,
Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 30%, Throw 40%.

Ellie

Fighting 30% (15/6), damage 1D3 or knife 1D4
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Charm 60%, Climb 60%, Credit Rating 10%, Drive
Wagon 30%, Listen 45%, Natural World 35%, Occult 10%,
Psychology 50%, Sleight of Hand 70%, Spot Hidden 60%,
Stealth 60%, Throw 30%.

Dannie

Fighting 45% (22/9), damage 1D3+1D4
or knife 1D4+1D4
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Animal Handling 60%, Climb 80%, Credit Rating 10%, Drive
Wagon 40%, Listen 50%, Natural World 30%, Psychology
30%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 30%, Throw 80%.

Gran

Fighting 45% (22/9), damage 1D3
or straight razor 1D4
Dodge 22% (11/4)

Skills

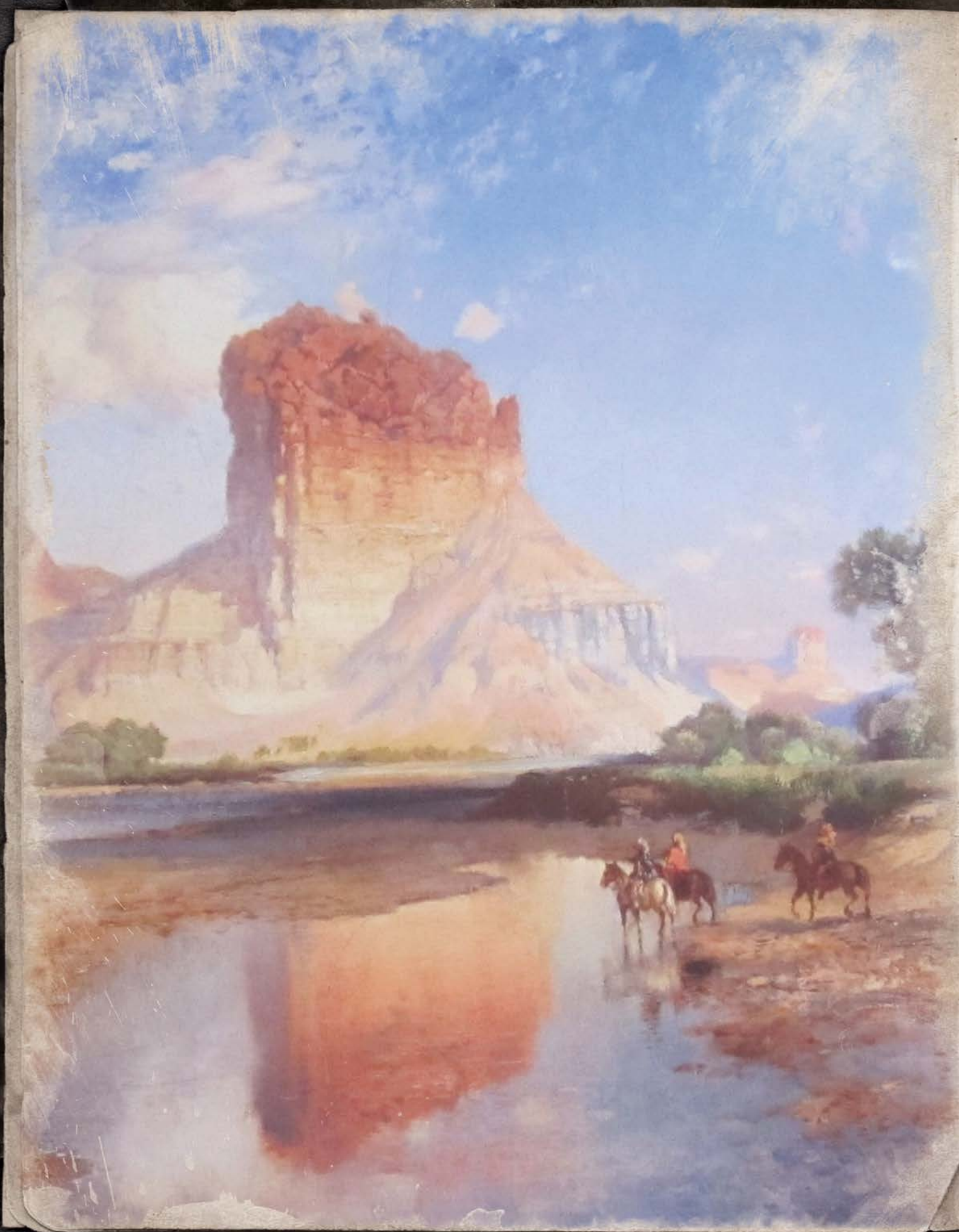
Cackle 80%, Credit Rating 15%, Drive Wagon 45%, Listen
60%, Natural World 60%, Psychology 40%, Spot Hidden
55%, Stealth 80%, Throw 45%.

their fellow townsfolk, which they use to their advantage to extort a few dollars out of their targets.

When they first settled in Stonegarden to prospect, the Ralstons were beset by a colony of rats that lived near their ranch. Before they could exterminate the vermin, they discovered that these rats were smart—very smart indeed. In fact, some of them had almost human features, and to the family's surprise and initial terror, these creatures could even speak. The rat-things knew stuff: where there was a little gold, where the Apache were camped, what the other prospectors were doing and talking about, and so on. Somehow, the Ralstons saw an opportunity and decided to spare the rat-things, preferring to work with the little spies to learn and sell information in Stonegarden.

The rat-creatures are not exactly like the rat-things described in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*; they are not transformed by malign sorcery, but merely a weird evolutionary anomaly. The handful of intelligent rat-things nest and run with hundreds of normal rats—treat these as rat packs (*Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 338). Anyone visiting or riding past the Ralston ranch and making a successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices 2D3 rats running about the place.

The rat-things lurk about in dark corners, within walls, and under floors in town, always listening for scraps of useful information. Anyone (including the investigators) with secrets to keep may be overheard or seen by the rats, which then relay the information to the Ralstons. Once they have a juicy secret, the Ralstons may decide to threaten—or



help—their target in exchange for a few dollars (or more). Of course, once they've been paid once, it is highly likely that the Ralstons will come calling again (and again) to milk the target as much as they can. It is left for the Keeper to determine which characters living in Stonegarden are in "debt" to the Ralstons, and what secrets the family knows.

Those who kill a rat are liable to get short shrift from Pa and Ma, who resent anyone killing what they see as their livelihood. Should a concerted effort be made to deal with the rat problem in town, the Ralstons may take steps to stop such a venture, preferring blackmail where possible, but resorting to violence if necessary.

RAT-THINGS, *catchers of secrets*

Use this profile for all of the Ralstons' rat-things.

STR 10	CON 35	SIZ 05	DEX 90	INT 40
APP —	POW 40	EDU —	SAN —	HP 4
DB: -2	Build: -2	Move: 9	MP: 8	

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (bite)

Prefer to climb up the legs or clothes of human opponents, or drop down from ceilings. Once an attack succeeds, the rat-thing clings on and keeps on biting. Tearing away a rat-thing costs an additional 1D3 hit points to the unfortunate victim.

Fighting	35% (17/7), damage 1D4-2 (min 1)
Dodge	45% (22/9)

Skills

Climb 70%, Jump 45%, Language (English) 50%, Listen 65%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 80%.

Armor: none, but attacks to hit a running rat-thing are made with one penalty die.

Spells: none.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a rat-thing.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Use the following as inspiration when designing games set in Stonegarden.

- A man comes to town gabbling about the legend of the Thunderbird. He's seeking folks to accompany him to find the creature's lair and share in its treasure.
- The entity under the mountain starts to stir, doubling the chances for bloodshed; tension increases twofold and extreme violence flares. Is the larva of the Other Gods about to wake up? Have the miners dug deep enough to disturb it? If such an event takes place, the madness is sure to spread and grow even worse. Will the town destroy itself before the entity even emerges? Can matters be quelled and the entity put back to sleep?
- The legends of the haunted Hohokam ruins and the stone garden may entice the investigators. Perhaps one of them gets a glimpse of the strange caretaker, encounters weird lights, or travels to a strange place by inadvertently passing through a Gate and returning.
- The caretaker of the observatory on Stone Garden Mesa may grow hungry and come into town to feed, or to seek sacrifices for a special ritual.
- The investigators are hired as bounty hunters to hunt down Bob Salmon (a.k.a. Marshal Duke Norton) for the murder he committed back in Mississippi. Alternatively, Marshal Norton might simply get suspicious of the newcomers in town—the nosy investigators.
- The investigators are hired by the family of Kenny Sherwood (the man murdered by Vic Landon) to discover his whereabouts.
- Apache from the surrounding mountains or Mexican bandits from south of the border raid the area, attacking prospectors and supply and payroll wagons. Perhaps "road agents" try to mount an attack on the mule trains carrying silver to Tucson.
- The Ralstons and their rat-friends learn something dangerous, either to them or the town. Maybe they find out what really happened to Kenny Sherwood, or that a robbery is going to take place, or that there's something really wrong down in the Criss-Cross Mine. Do they try to blackmail Marshal Norton and find they're in over their heads? Who can a family of blackmailers turn to for help?
- The people of Stonegarden may decide to try and rid themselves of the rat infestation, leading to a bizarre war with the eerily intelligent vermin.



ADVENTURE SEED: THE DEVIL'S ROUND-UP

The *Shadow Over Stillwater* takes place some 70 miles (113 km) from Castronegro, a doom-haunted town first featured in an old *Call of Cthulhu* adventure called “The Secret of Castronegro” (*Cthulhu Companion*, *Cthulhu Classics*, *Call of Cthulhu 3rd edition*). The source of Castronegro’s troubles goes back centuries, and its history suggests possibilities for a good Western-era adventure. While some Keepers may like to look up the original scenario, the following adventure seed does not require reference to the earlier adventure. The following contains a plot overview for the Keeper to develop and expand into their own campaign.

BACKGROUND

Castronegro was originally founded as the town of Agua Blanca in 1680 by the Spanish sorcerer Bernardo de Diaz and his family, along with their sinister followers the Vilheila-Pereira family. In 1728, other heretical families arrived: the Herreras and Garcias, both driven out of Spain by the Inquisition. About this same time, Agua Blanca’s name was changed—for reasons unknown—to Castronegro.

The Diazes (they’ve dropped the “de”), the Vilheila-Pereiras, and their followers worship the strange Outer God known as Yog-Sothoth. They dress in dark robes and make sacrifices of infants and animals on an obelisk-crowned hill outside of town. The most powerful members of these two families are formidable, long-lived wizards—Bernardo Diaz is immortal, thanks to a magical ring he wears. Members of the cult believe they will be resurrected to serve Yog-Sothoth when the “Key and the Gate” regains permanent access to

our dimension. Deceased cultists are buried with small jade figurines, which are believed to ensure their rebirth. Sacrifices are made with enchanted sickles, but, to avoid suspicion, the victims are always taken from surrounding towns and American Indian communities, rather than from Castronegro.

By the late 19th century, Castronegro has a population of over 500 people, about 100 of whom are members of the Diaz or Vilheila-Pereira families. Not all of these founding family members are cultists (perhaps only about 10), but the family names inspire fear in the community, regardless of whether or not they are actually cultists. The Garcia and Herrera families constitute another 75 or so members of the population, and again, only a handful (about 8) are cult members. Some of the notable locations in and around Castronegro are as follows:

- **Herrera Hotel:** currently owned by non-cultist members of the Herrera family.
- **Changeling Tavern:** also unaffiliated with the cult.
- **Castronegro Chapel:** recently shut down, but contained in its steeple a very weird statue of a robed humanoid wielding a sickle.
- **The Obelisk:** situated on a hilltop outside of town and used by the cult for rituals.
- **The Diaz Family Vault:** filled with mummified remains of Diaz family members.
- **Casa de Diaz:** built by Bernardo in 1680, now inhabited by Carlos Diaz and the often-absent Bernardo, it holds an impressive occult library and other terrible secrets below its upper stories.

The Castronegro cult consists of about 15–20 members, led during Bernardo Diaz's frequent absences by Carlos Diaz and Kristofer Vilheila-Pereira, both elderly but deadly sorcerers. Castronegro's non-cultist residents fear the sorcerous families and the secretive cult, but are scared to act or call for help, as the cult's enemies tend to suffer strange fates or disappear altogether. The normal folk go about their business and try to forget the rumors and machinations of the ruling families.

Carlos Diaz resides just outside of town in the Casa de Diaz, built by Bernardo de Diaz, while Kristofer Vilheila-Pereira lives on a ranch not far away. The families' dark, sorcerous experiments and centuries of inbreeding have cursed some Diazes and Vilheila-Pereiras, turning them into horrific creatures residing in the warrens and catacombs in the hill beneath Casa de Diaz. These "Casa de Diaz horrors" share the black hair and green eyes common to the Diaz and Vilheila-Pereira families, but they are stooped and naked, with claw-like hands, long fingernails and toenails, mouths full of sharp teeth, and long, slaverling tongues. There are over 200 such creatures beneath Casa de Diaz, and they sometimes leave their dark demesne to raid the surrounding countryside for food and sport.

THE DEVIL'S ROUND-UP

Dark rumors swell and swirl among Castronegro's neighboring communities. Cattle are stolen or left mutilated on the arid ranges, while strange lights are seen at night on the hilltops around Castronegro. Travelers, American Indians, and others turn up missing throughout the region. Some of the rougher residents of the outlying communities have had enough, and bands of vigilantes have begun roaming the area. These hooded and masked nightriders have begun seizing and executing anyone with the telltale black hair and green eyes of the Diaz and Vilheila-Pereira clans, should such individuals be found outside Castronegro. Many of the victims are innocent of any wrongdoing, but the vigilantes continue their raids, nevertheless.

Investigators may hear of the trouble brewing in Castronegro—masked nightriders, lynchings, cattle rustling and mutilations, child disappearances, strange nocturnal lights, and so on—and decide to look into the matter. When they first arrive in the area, they find ruthless vigilantes and fearful townspeople, but soon the investigators will face secretive cultists, potshots from unseen riflemen, and perhaps even attacks by the Casa de Diaz horrors.

Finally, a grimly determined vigilante gang decides to raid the Casa de Diaz one storm-wracked night. A score or more masked horsemen ride beneath lightning-streaked skies toward the haunted mansion on the hill. There, the riders are set upon by hordes of hunched horrors with black hair, green eyes, and ghastly tongues. Chanting voices echo from the mansion, and the sky above roils—a bubbling and festering mess heralding the arrival of Yog-Sothoth, come in answer to his worshippers' call for help. Will the terrible Outer God appear to scoop up the mass sacrifice of the vigilantes or can the investigators somehow stop this nightmare?

CHARACTERS OF CASTRONEGRO

CARLOS DIAZ, age 90+, cult leader

Living in the opulent Casa de Diaz, the sorcerer's age is unknown, although he appears as a wizened man in his 90s. Due to the increasing frequency of Bernardo Diaz's absences, Carlos controls the cult in partnership with Kristofer Vilheila-Pereira, with the two working, more or less, in unison to direct the cult's affairs and maintain a grip upon the town of Castronegro.

Of late, Carlos has been spending more and more time devoted to the study of magic, with long periods hidden away working on alchemical matters. The purpose of these experiments remains a mystery.

- **Description:** tall, with a full beard, dark thick hair, and green eyes, he casts a particularly domineering shadow despite his advanced years.
- **Traits:** cunning, treacherous, and cold-hearted.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** seeks test subjects for his diabolical alchemical experiments.

STR 55	CON 50	SIZ 70	DEX 40	INT 85
APP 30	POW 105	EDU 95	SAN 00	HP 12
DB: +1D4	Build: 1	Move: 2	MP: 21	Luck: 55

Combat

Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4 or large knife 1D8+1D4
.44 Colt Army revolver	40% (20/8), damage 1D10+2
12-g sawed-off shotgun (DB)	45% (22/9), damage 4D6/1D6
Dodge	20% (10/4)

ADVENTURE SEED: THE DEVIL'S ROUND-UP

Skills

Cthulhu Mythos 45%, Credit Rating 80%, History 70%, Intimidate 70%, Language (English) 75%, Language (Latin) 50%, Language (Spanish) 95%, Law 30%, Library Use 55%, Listen 60%, Medicine 40%, Natural World 55%, Occult 65%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 55%, Science (Pharmacy) 70%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 50%, Throw 30%.

Spells: Alter Weather*, Banishment of Yde Etad, Bind Enemy*, Bless Blade, Call/Dismiss Deity (Yog-Sothoth), Chant of Thoth, Cloud Memory, Contact Servitor of the Outer Gods, Dread Curse of Azathoth, Enthrall Victim, Evil Eye, Fist of Yog-Sothoth, Flesh Ward, Gate Boxes, Mindblast, Power Drain*, Resurrection, Stop Heart*, Summon/Bind Byakhee, Vanish*, Voice of Ra*, Voorish Sign, Wither Limb, Words of Power.

**Spell may be found in the Grand Grimoire of Cthulhu Mythos Magic.*

KRISTOFER VILHEILA-PEREIRA, age 80+, cult leader

A cruel and wicked man, Vilheila-Pereira seems to live to inflict pain on others. Rumors abound in Castronegro of frightful screams, heard late at night, emanating from the ranch where the cult leader makes his home. Indeed, people seen entering the ranch are rarely seen leaving it.

On the surface, Vilheila-Pereira appears content to work in partnership with Carlos Diaz, although it would come as no surprise if he secretly desired to become the sole inheritor of the cult when Bernardo Diaz "retires." With Carlos' time spent locked away in Casa de Diaz performing who knows what experiments, Vilheila-Pereira could be considered the more active of the pair, dealing with the day-to-day business of running Castronegro and the cult.

- **Description:** a large and bulbous body, his skin is covered in liver spots, his flesh more like a sack of skin hung over his frame. Hairless, with no eyebrows, his visage might be likened to a demon when he smiles.
- **Traits:** cruel, enjoys inflicting pain and torment on others.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** secretly working to usurp the cult's leadership when Bernardo Diaz "moves on."

STR 45	CON 45	SIZ 60	DEX 45	INT 65
APP 35	POW 95	EDU 85	SAN 00	HP 10
DB: 0	Build: 0	Move: 3	MP: 19	Luck: 45

Brawl	60% (30/12), damage 1D3 or large knife 1D8
.31 Colt pocket revolver	45% (22/9), damage 1D8
Dodge	25% (12/5)

Skills

Accounting 35%, Charm 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 35%, Credit Rating 70%, History 65%, Intimidate 60%, Language (English) 55%, Language (Latin) 40%, Language (Spanish) 85%, Library Use 50%, Natural World 55%, Occult 60%, Persuade 45%, Psychology 45%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 70%, Throw 60%.

Spells: Alter Weather*, Bind Enemy*, Bless Blade, Brew Space Mead, Call/Dismiss Deity Yog-Sothoth, Chant of Thoth, Cloud Memory, Contact Servitor of the Outer Gods, Dominate, Evil Eye, Flesh Ward, Implant Fear, Mindblast, Power Drain, Shrivelling, Summon/Bind Byakhee, Voorish Sign, Words of Power, Wrack.

**Spell may be found in the Grand Grimoire of Cthulhu Mythos Magic.*

TYPICAL VIGILANTES, AGE 20-60

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	65	60	70	60	55	85	70	65	60	65
CON	65	70	60	75	70	60	65	65	75	55
SIZ	65	70	75	80	60	65	60	65	55	80
DEX	55	75	60	50	45	70	65	65	75	55
INT	60	60	65	60	70	65	65	60	55	65
POW	50	45	55	45	60	55	70	60	50	60
APP	50	55	60	40	45	50	55	65	50	60
EDU	55	60	50	60	55	50	70	60	55	65
SAN	50	45	55	45	60	55	70	60	50	60
HP	13	14	13	15	13	12	12	13	13	13
DB	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	0	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	0	+1D4
Build	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1
Move	8	8	7	7	7	9	9	8	9	7
MP	10	9	11	9	12	11	14	12	10	12

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+DB
 .45 Colt revolver 45% (22/9), damage 1D10+2
 .44-40 Winchester '73 rifle 55% (27/11), damage 2D6+1
 16-g shotgun (2B) 40% (20/8), damage
 2D6+2/1D6+1/1D4
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

*#1-#4 each carry a .45 Colt revolver, #5-#8 each carry a .44-40 Winchester '73 rifle, and #9-#10 each carry a 16-g shotgun (2B)

Skills

Fast Talk 30%, Intimidate 30%, Jump 45%, Language (English) 45%, Language (Spanish) 30%, Navigate 65%, Persuade 35%, Psychology 30%, Ride 45%, Rope Use 40%, Spot Hidden 45%, Throw 50%, Track 45%, Trap 30%.

ADVENTURE SEED: THE DEVIL'S ROUND-UP



TYPICAL CASTRONEGRO CULTISTS, AGE 20-75

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	55	75	60	50	60	50	45	55	60	70
CON	50	60	60	55	45	65	55	50	55	65
SIZ	60	75	70	65	65	70	70	60	55	70
DEX	55	50	45	75	55	50	40	55	80	65
INT	65	60	60	65	70	55	65	65	60	70
POW	55	60	60	50	55	75	70	60	50	50
APP	50	55	45	40	50	70	55	65	50	45
EDU	60	65	55	50	60	55	60	65	70	55
SAN	20	00	15	00	15	25	00	00	00	10
HP	11	13	13	12	11	13	12	11	11	13
DB	0	+1D4	+1D4	0	+1D4	0	0	0	0	+1D4
Build	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Move	7	8	7	8	7	7	7	7	9	8
MP	11	12	12	10	11	15	14	12	10	10

Combat

Brawl 55% (27/11), damage 1D3+DB
 .36 Colt Navy revolver 35% (17/7), damage 1D10
 .44-40 Winchester '73 rifle 45% (22/9), damage 2D6+1
 Dodge 30% (15/6)

**#1-#5 each carry a .36 Colt Navy revolver and #5-#10 each carry a .44-40 Winchester '73 rifle*

Skills

Charm 35%, Cthulhu Mythos 15%, Fast Talk 35%, History 30%, Intimidate 40%, Jump 45%, Language (English) 45%, Language (Spanish) 50%, Navigate 65%, Persuade 35%, Psychology 30%, Ride 35%, Spot Hidden 40%, Throw 40%.

Spells: Evil Eye, Voorish Sign.



CASA DE DIAZ HORRORS, BESTIAL HORRORS

Naked and hunched, sporting characteristic black hair and green eyes, these foul horrors lurk beneath Casa de Diaz, waiting to pounce on the unwary with their claw-like fingernails and teeth.

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
STR	70	65	60	65	55	50	65	60	55	75
CON	70	75	70	65	60	65	55	60	55	70
SIZ	65	60	65	70	50	45	65	65	60	80
DEX	55	65	45	50	40	55	75	60	55	55
INT	50	45	30	35	40	45	30	35	50	40
POW	40	50	35	40	30	50	55	45	35	40
APP	50	55	45	40	50	70	55	65	50	45
EDU	60	65	55	50	60	55	60	65	70	55
SAN	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
HP	13	13	13	13	11	11	12	12	11	15
DB	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	0	0	+1D4	+1D4	0	+1D4
Build	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1
Move	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
MP	8	10	7	8	6	10	11	9	7	8

Combat

Attacks per Round: 1 (claw or bite)

Fighting 35% (17/7), damage 1D4+DB
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

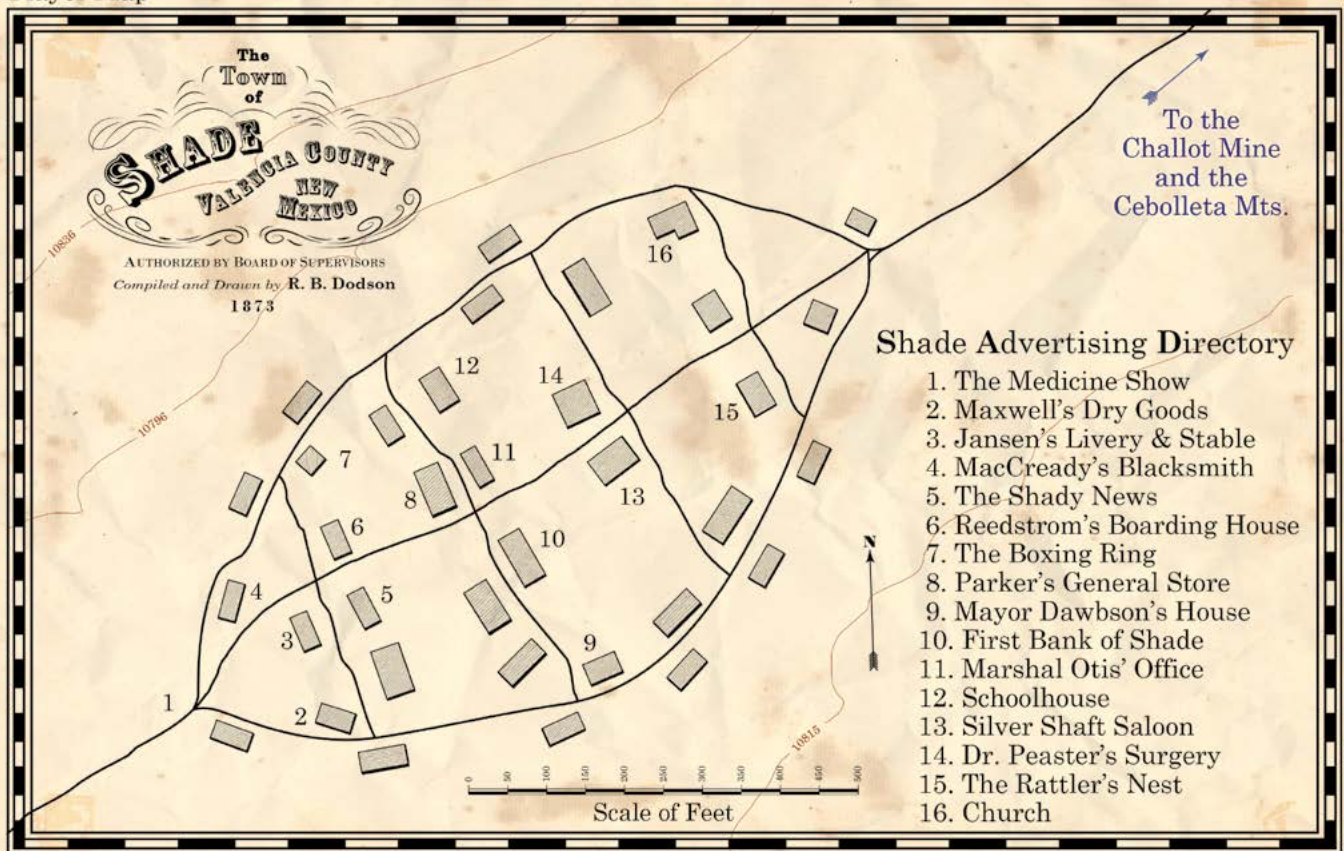
Climb 65%, Jump 60%, Language (English) 10%, Language (Spanish) 25%, Listen 45%, Scent Prey 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 60%, Throw 40%.

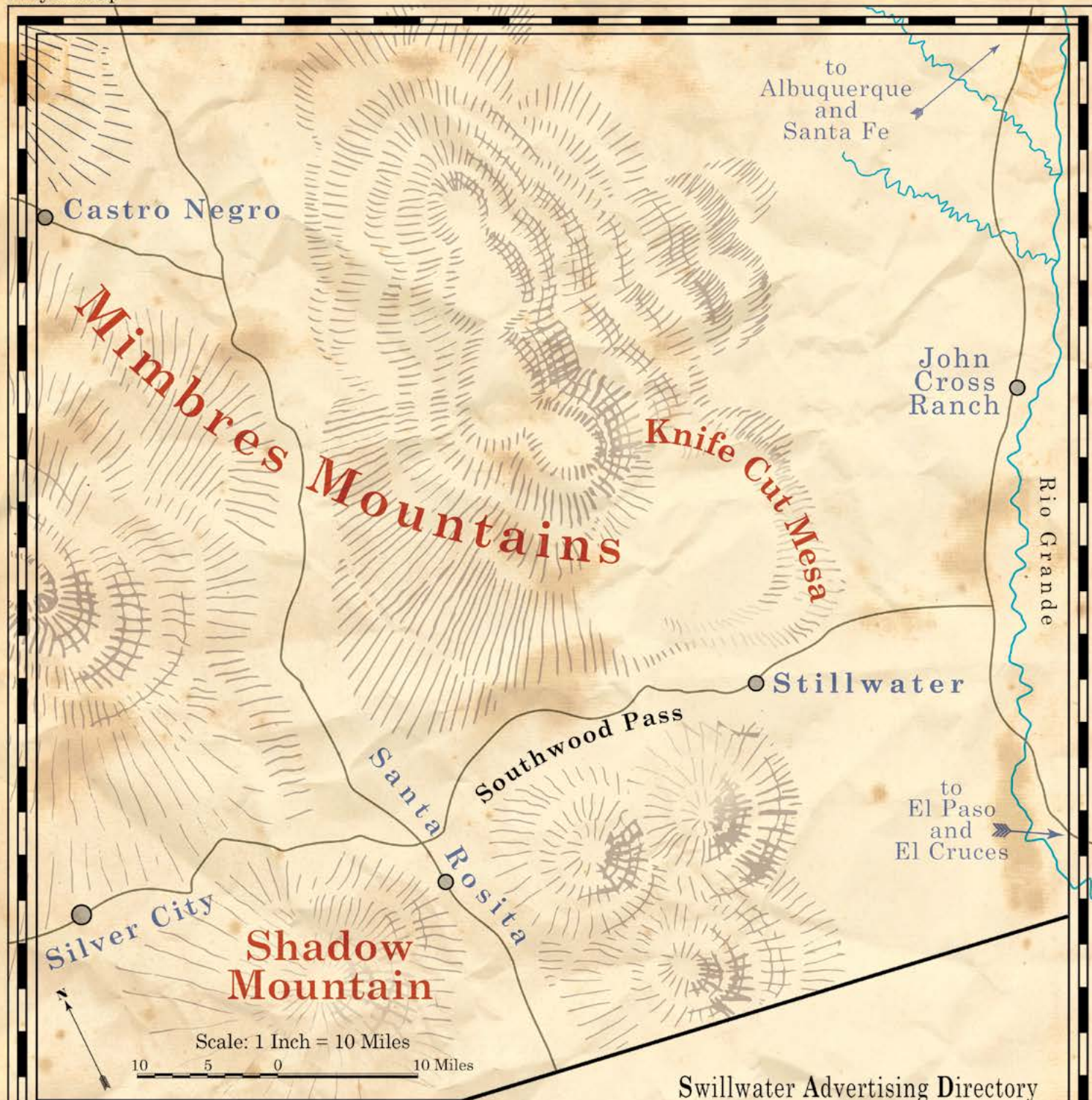
Dark Eyes: able to see in darkness.

Sanity loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a Casa de Diaz horror.

COLLECTED PLAYER HANDOUTS

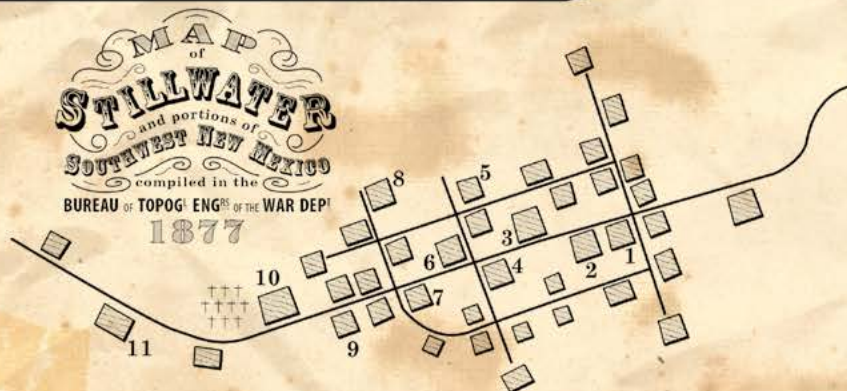
Player Map



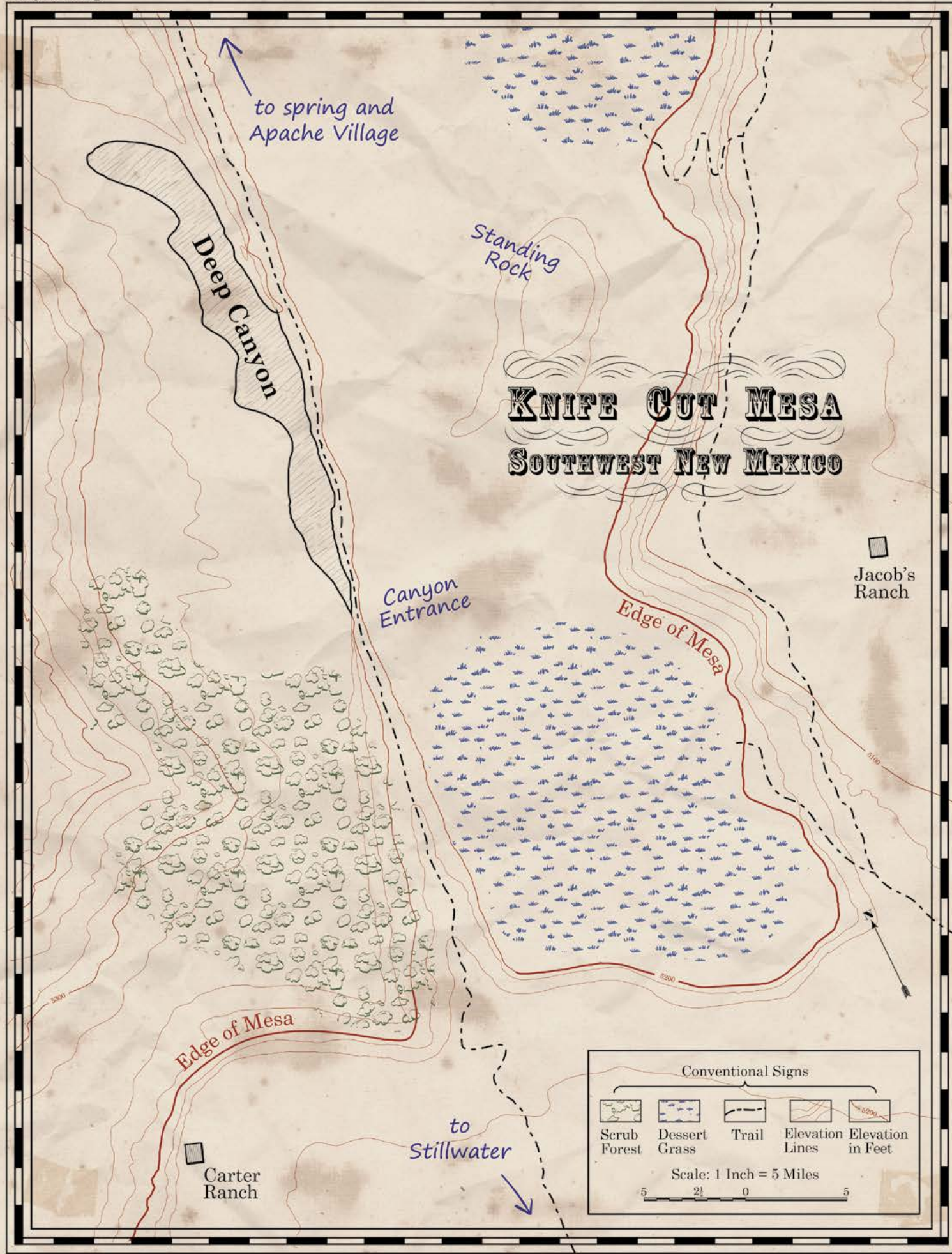


Stillwater Advertising Directory

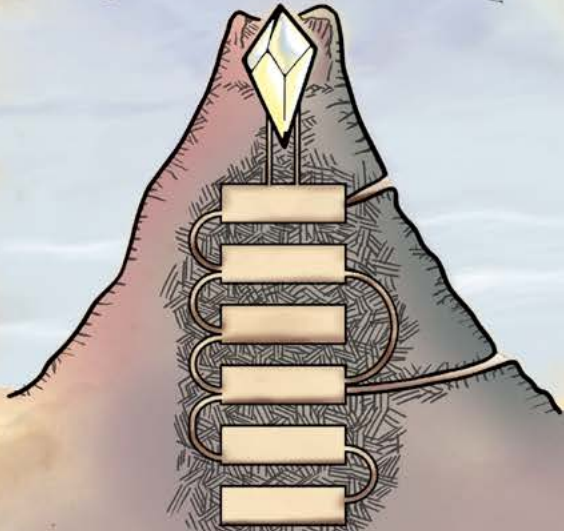
1. Saucedo, Livery
2. Del Castillo, Blacksmith
3. Sweetwater Saloon
4. Peters, Undertaker
5. Chen, Laundry
6. Hunter, General Store
7. Marshal Whitman's Office & Jail
8. Henry Fletcher, Doctor
9. Schoolhouse
10. Church of Stillwater
11. Buena Suerte Cantina



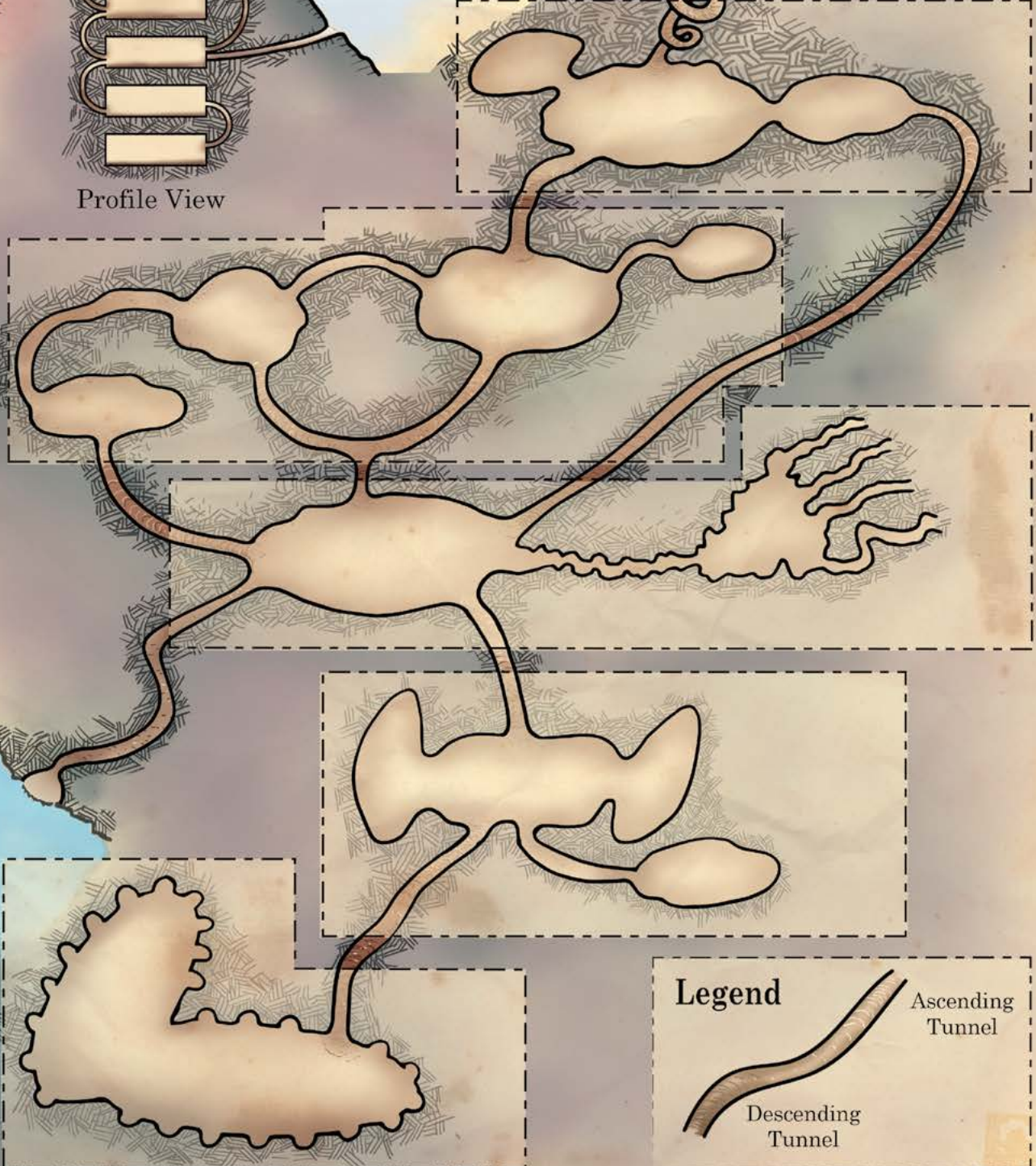
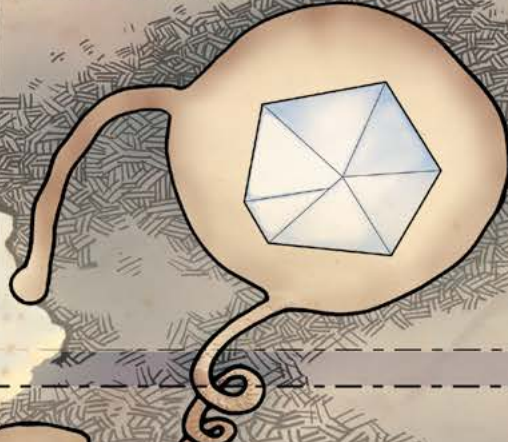
No. 43



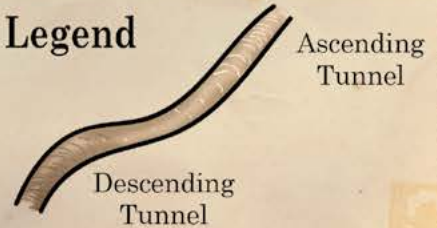
VIPER'S NEST



Profile View



Legend



MAP of SANTA ROSITA and portions of NEW MEXICO

Compiled from his private notes taken while U. S. Deputy Surveyor
and from the latest Official Reports in the Departments at Washington City,
By

E. A. Kruger

1865



Scale of Feet

Main St.

Main St.

to Shadow
Mountain



Unitarian Church of
Santa Rosita



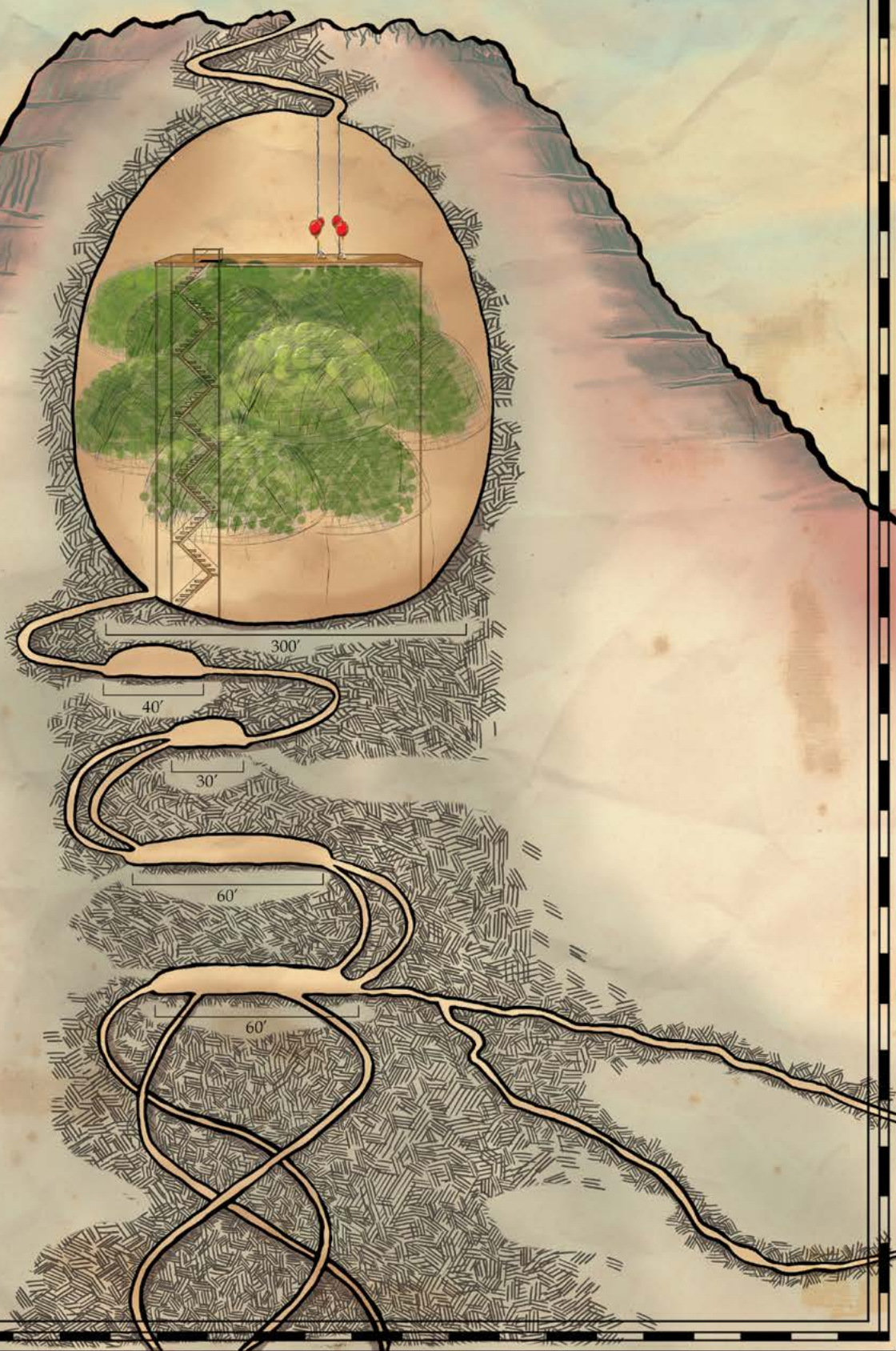
The Victoria
Saloon

Santa Rosita Advertising Directory

1. Jameson's Livery
2. First Baptist Church
3. Blacksmith
4. Deputy Sheriff's
Office & Jail
5. Forrest's Boutique
6. Copeley's General Store
7. Dr. Martell's Surgery
8. Collins' Butcher Shop
9. The Victoria Saloon
10. Ward's Livery Stable
11. Carpenter
12. Unitarian Church
13. Hannigan's Hardware
14. Brooks' Laundry
15. The Silver Dollar Guest House
16. Grocery
17. First Bank of Santa Rosita
18. Ma Richert's Restaurant
19. Hurst's Tailoring
20. The Green River Saloon
21. Mayor Shaw's House
22. Santa Rosita Feed

SHADOW MOUNTAIN

Profile View



Map Representative Only - Not to Scale

VALENCIA COUNTY

NEW MEXICO

Scale: 1 Inch = 5 Miles

5 2½ 0 5



Cebolleta Mountains

Road to
Santa Fe

Martin
x Ranch

Challot
Ranch
x

x Town of Shade

Challot
Mine

Road to
Albuquerque

Mendoza
x Ranch



**A Map of the
MOUNTAIN TOP LAKE**

Bird's-Eye View

STONEGARDEN OF ARIZONA

AND NEARBY MINES

And Other Points of Interests

Stonegarden Directory of Mines

- 24. Criss-Cross Mine
- 25. Higher Arc Mine
- 26. Lady Jane Mine
- 27. Silver Heart Mine
- 28. Landon Stamping Mill
- "A" Landon Mining Co. Stables
- "B" Miners' Barracks

Names of Proprietors & Tenants

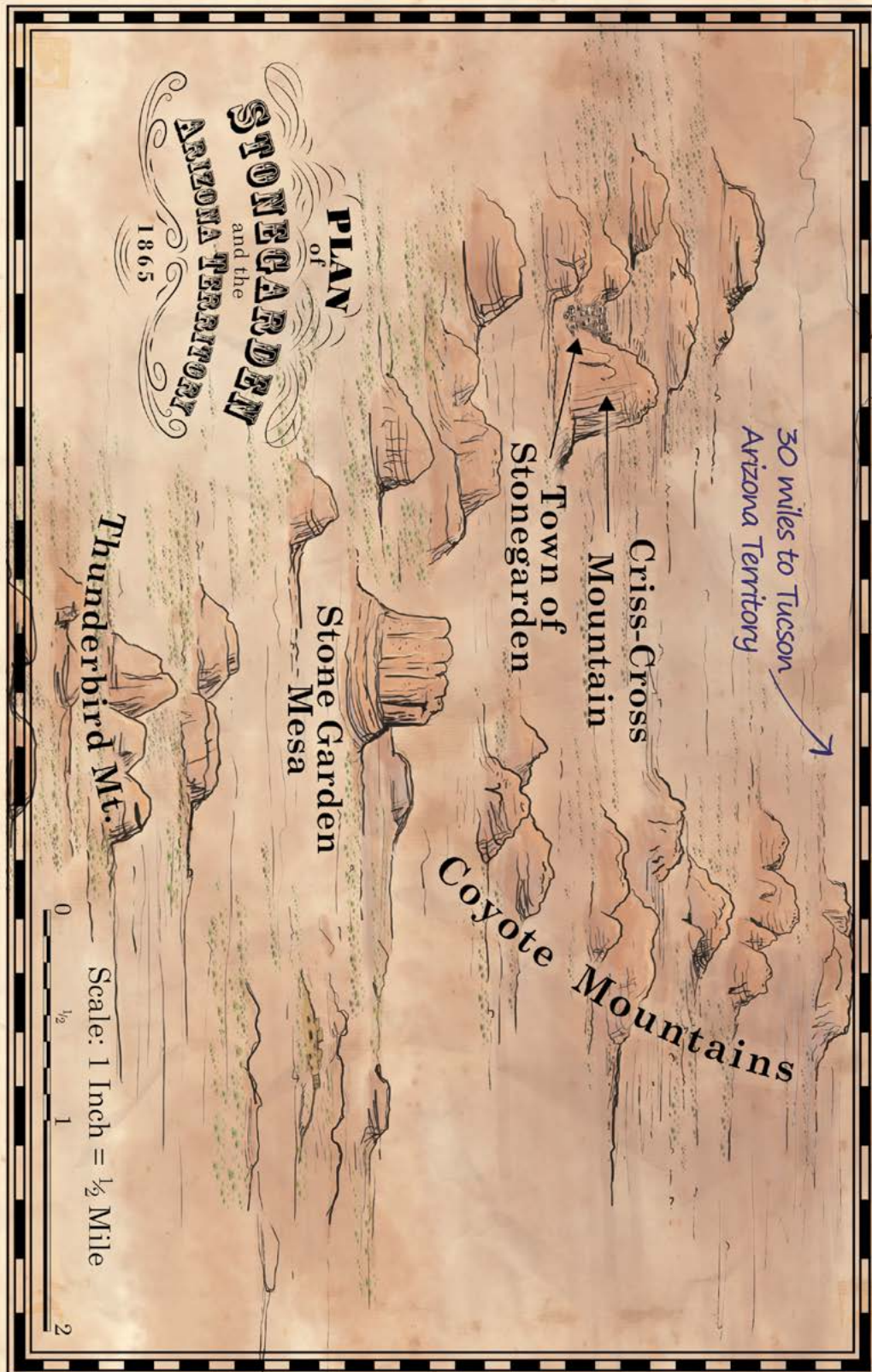
- 1. Landon Mining Co. Office
- 2. Dr. Munsey's Surgery
- 3. Riordan's Rooming House
- 4. Slow Horse Saloon
- 5. The Pearl Saloon
- 6. Calico Cat
- 7. The King Saloon
- 8. Landon Co. Store
- 9. Toobin's General Store
- 10. Migliardi's Grocery
- 11. Wallace's Tobacco & Cigars
- 12. Lawson's Diner
- 13. Sheriff Norton's Office & Jail
- 14. Sheriff Norton's House
- 15. Little Memphis Restaurant
- 16. Lafollette's Meat Market
- 17. Liddell Freight Co.
- 18. Warwick Livery Stable
- 19. First Church of Stonegarden
- 20. Town Cemetery
- 21. "Stoney" Joe Andrew's House
- 22. Monty Merrill's House
- 23. Vic Landon's House

Criss-Cross Mountain

Scale: 1 Inch = 2 Miles

0 2 4 8

Player Map



Player Map

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Frederic Remington
1901



THE AUTHORS

KEVIN ROSS

Kevin Ross has written, compiled, and edited material for the *Call of Cthulhu* game for over 30 years. He helped create the Lovecraft Country series of books for the game, designed the infamous—and now ubiquitous—Yellow Sign symbol, helmed the award-winning 3rd edition of *Cthulhu by Gaslight*, and created the award-winning *Down Darker Trails* and the forthcoming *Colonial Lovecraft Country* settings for the game. In addition, he has contributed material to Modiphius Entertainments' *Conan: Adventures in an Age Undreamed Of* RPG. Kevin also edited two *Dead But Dreaming* anthologies of Lovecraftian fiction, and (with Brian Sammons) the western-horror fiction anthology *The Edge of Sundown*. His home is filled with spaghetti western memorabilia, movie posters, Frazetta prints, cacti, cow skulls, and thousands of books, games, DVDs, CDs, and records. He disdains all social media and is in many other ways a consummate curmudgeon.

C. L. WERNER

C. L. Werner was a diseased servant of the Horned Rat long before his first story in *Inferno!* magazine. His Black Library credits include *The Red Duke*, *Mathias Thulmann: Witch Hunter*, the *Grey Seer Thanquol* and *Brunner the Bounty Hunter* trilogies. In the *Time of Legends* series, he has penned the *Black Plague* trilogy and *Curse of the Phoenix Crown*, the final volume in the *War of Vengeance* series. His first full-fledged foray into the gothic sci-fi universe of Warhammer 40k occurred in 2012 with *The Siege of Castellax*. He has written stories for as

diverse settings as Wild West Exodus, Iron Kingdoms, Kings of War, Stary Bogow, and Beyond the Gates of Antares. The adventures of samurai Shintaro Oba have appeared in several anthologies published by Rogue Blades' Entertainment. He has also contributed a novella to the Cryptid Clash series. More recently, his short fiction has been featured in anthologies like *Kaiju Rising*, *Fantastic Futures 13*, *Marching Time*, *A Grimoire of Eldritch Inquests*, *Shakespeare vs Cthulhu*, and *Sharkpunk*. An inveterate bibliophile, he squanders the proceeds from his writing on hoary old volumes—or at least reasonably affordable reprints of same—to further his library of fantasy fiction, horror stories, and occult tomes.

MIKE MASON

Call of Cthulhu Line Editor. Mike is the co-writer of *Call of Cthulhu 7th edition* and *Pulp Cthulhu*. Around the turn of the millennium, Mike edited and published *The Whisperer*, a zine devoted to *Call of Cthulhu*. In the intervening period Mike set up and ran the Kult of Keepers, a group of scenario writers who organized the UK's Cthulhu Nationals Tournament. Mike, no stranger to the arcane workings of games companies, previously worked for Games Workshop as Black Industries Line Manager for the ENnie Award winning Warhammer 40,000 RPG. Nowadays Mike lives in Nottingham, England, and enjoys coffee, strong beer, and whiskey in equal measure. Mike edits, writes, and produces all books for Chaosium's Call of Cthulhu line and, when not doing that, can be found watching horror films and searching for Insmouth gold.

OLD WEST		CHARACTERISTICS			
Name _____		STR	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	DEX	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
Player _____				INT	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
Occupation _____				Idea	
Age _____ Sex _____		CON	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	APP	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
				POW	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
Residence _____		SIZ	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	EDU	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
Birthplace _____				Know	
				Move	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
				Rate	

Name _____

Player _____

Occupation _____

Age _____ **Sex** _____

Residence _____

Birthplace _____

OLD WEST		CHARACTERISTICS			
Name _____		STR	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	DEX	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
Player _____				INT	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
Occupation _____				Idea	
Age _____ Sex _____		CON	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	APP	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
				POW	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
Residence _____		SIZ	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	EDU	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
Birthplace _____				Know	
				Move	<div><div></div><div></div></div>
				Rate	

STR		DEX		INT Idea	
CON		APP		POW	
SIZ		EDU Know		Move Rate	

Major Wound

HIT POINTS

00	01	02	03	04	05	06
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	32	33	34
35	36	37	38	39	40	41

Temp. Insane

Indef. Insane

08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76
77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

Start

Max

Insane

01 02 03 04 05 06 07

SANITY

DOWN DARKER TRAILS

LUCK

08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76
77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

Out of Luck

01 02 03 04 05 06 07

MAGIC POINTS

05	06	07	08	09
10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24

INVESTIGATOR SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (EDU)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope Use (05%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Handling (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (01%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Handgun) (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Credit Rating (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Gambling (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Trap (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychology (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Wagon/Coach (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Elec. Repair (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (EDU)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rope Use (05%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Handling (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (01%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)
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Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Trap (10%)
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Wagon/Coach (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychology (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Elec. Repair (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/>

WEAPONS						COMBAT		
Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Mod.
Unarmed				1d3 + db	-	1	-	-

Damage Bonus

Build

Dodge

[illegible]

WEAPONS						COMBAT		
Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Mod.
Unarmed				1d3 + db	-	1	-	-

Damage Bonus

Build

Dodge

Damage Bonus	
Build	
Dodge	

BACKSTORY



Personal Description

Traits

Ideology/Beliefs

Injuries & Scars

Significant People

Phobias & Manias

Meaningful Locations

Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts

Treasured Possessions

Encounters with Strange Entities

HISTORY

CASH & ASSETS

Spending Level

Cash

Assets

POSSESSIONS

QUICK REFERENCE RULES

Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success:	Fumble	Fail	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Critical
	100/96+	> skill	≤ skill	½ skill	⅓ skill	01

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

Wounds & Healing

First Aid heals 1HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

Major Wound = loss of $\geq \frac{1}{2}$ max HP in one attack

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

Reach 0 HP with Major Wound = **Dying**

Dying: First Aid = temp. stabilized; then require Medicine

Natural Heal rate (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

Natural Heal rate (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

FELLOW INVESTIGATORS

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

ME

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

CHARACTERISTICS

Name _____
Player _____
Occupation _____
Age _____ Sex _____
Archetype _____
Residence _____
Birthplace _____

STR

--	--

 DEX

--	--

 INT

--	--

CON

--	--

 APP

--	--

 POW

--	--

SIZ

--	--

 EDU

--	--

 Move

--	--

Rate

--	--

Dying

--	--

 Max HP

--	--

 Temp.

--	--

 Insane

--	--

 Start

--	--

 Max

--	--

 Insane 01 02 03 04 05 06 07
HIT POINTS 00 01 02 03 04 05 06
07 08 09 10 11 12 13
14 15 16 17 18 19 20
21 22 23 24 25 26 27
28 29 30 31 32 33 34
35 36 37 38 39 40 41
08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53
54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76
77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

DOWN DARKER TRAILS

LUCK 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53
54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76
77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99
Out of Luck 01 02 03 04 05 06 07
08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53
54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76
77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99
MAGIC POINTS 00 01 02 03 04
05 06 07 08 09
10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19
20 21 22 23 24

INVESTIGATOR SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (EDU)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Rope Use (05%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Handling (05%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Science (01%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology (01%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (20%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology (01%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Handgun) (20%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (01%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) (25%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (01%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm (15%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (20%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
Credit Rating (00%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Gambling (10%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (01%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Trap (10%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot (01%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Wagon/Coach (20%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (01%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Psychology (10%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Elec. Repair (00%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (15%)	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		

WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malf.
Unarmed				1d3 + db	-	1	-	-

COMBAT

Damage Bonus

--	--

Build

--	--

Dodge

--	--

BACKSTORY



Personal Description

Traits

Ideology/Beliefs

Injuries & Scars

Significant People

Phobias & Manias

Meaningful Locations

Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts

Treasured Possessions

Encounters with Strange Entities

HISTORY

CASH & ASSETS

Spending Level

Cash

Assets

POSSESSIONS

QUICK REFERENCE RULES

Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success:	Fumble	Fail	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Critical
	100/96+	> skill	≤ skill	1/2 skill	1/3 skill	01

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

Using Luck

Adjust skill rolls (1 Luck per skill point); Avoid malfunction/melee fumble (10 Luck). Halve SAN loss (SAN loss x 2 Luck); Stay conscious (1 Luck, double per round after).

Avoid Death (all Luck points spent; requires Luck ≥ 30).

Healing

Natural healing: +2 HP per day.

First Aid: +1D4 HP.

Medicine: +1D4 HP.

FELLOW INVESTIGATORS

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

ME

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

Char.
Player

CALL of CTHULHU

SHADOWS OVER STILLWATER

AGAINST THE MYTHOS IN THE DOWN DARKER TRAILS SETTING

A collection of scenarios and settings for *Down Darker Trails*—the Wild West setting for *Call of Cthulhu* and *Pulp Cthulhu*. Contained within are further insights and challenges for those seeking bold adventure in the American Old West.

A three-part campaign, **The Shadow Over Stillwater** set in the mountains of the New Mexico Territory. A hunt for a fugitive murderer leads the investigators into a mystery involving odd townsfolk, strange lights in the sky, walking corpses, and the machinations of a once-powerful and ancient race seeking to reclaim their lost glory.

Beneath the Burning Sun sees the investigators arrive in the town of Shade in Valencia County, New Mexico where they become embroiled in a desperate bank robbery and join a posse to track down a gang of ferocious outlaws led by a crazed preacher and a hardened gunslinger. A bloody trail leads to an abandoned Spanish fort high in the Cebolletas where death waits. This scenario can be played as part of the larger campaign or as a standalone adventure.

Stonegarden expands the *Down Darker Trails* setting. A booming mining town in Arizona, tucked away in the Coyote Mountains, this locale provides a new and fully realized town in which to base adventures. The history of the region, its locations, and people are detailed, as well as its secrets, threats, and Mythos connections. This new campaign setting presents a community with one of the most violent reputations in the entire West. A place of danger, wild adventure, and dark secrets.

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That's plenty of adventure to keep your gaming group immersed in the horrors and terrors of the Old West.

Requires the *Call of Cthulhu Keeper's Rulebook* (7th edition) to play, and is optionally usable with *Pulp Cthulhu*. A copy of *Down Darker Trails* core setting book is recommended.

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